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A handbook for the teaching of play production in the secondary schools.

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A HANDBOOK
FOR THE TEACHING OF PLAY PRODUCTION
IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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by

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Purpose of the Study

The public school is the one medium by which all people, irrespective of race, creed or social standing, are influenced. To-day, one of the major objectives of the school is to meet the needs of the child. In this paper, the writer has attempted to present one subject, "Play Production," as a core through which children may engage in many experiences, thereby meeting their needs through pleasurable, worthwhile activities. Since many educators have not awakened to the realization that dramatics is so inclusive of many activities that it can, in one phase or another, meet some needs for every child, the educational values of dramatics have been discussed at some length. The writer has attempted to present the many phases of play production, beginning with the teacher and tracing it through every step from "Selecting the Play" to the "Final Performance." This material has been presented as a handbook in order that those teachers who are not familiar with the problems and activities in producing a play might refer to it as a guide for their first adventures. Although many books have been written on Play Production, few have been approached from the viewpoint of the teacher. It has been the purpose of this writer to keep the teacher's viewpoint throughout.

Need for the Study

Educators have not all been convinced that dramatics should be as much a part of the curriculum as music and art. Many school systems, large and small, have placed dramatics in the curriculum and have found that it is worthy of a permanent place. There is a great need for presenting the values of dramatics to those educators who have not yet been "convinced." Administrators and teachers alike need to be shown that dramatics is not a "frill" subject, and that it provides a media of many experiences which the present educational philosophy demands.

There is also a need for awakening educators to the fact that the teaching of dramatics requires trained teachers. Neglect in this matter has too often caused dramatics to be treated as an unfavored "step-child." This attitude has caused the true values to become hidden under the mistakes of the untrained teacher. The study has been made largely from the viewpoint of the teacher, thereby showing the great need of training for the teaching of this subject.

Teachers often have the desire to produce a play and the artistic instinct for producing it, but they feel at a loss when confronted with the many problems involved. Often, they do not realize the numerous phases to be considered until the production date is near. This causes confusion and an unfinished performance. This

paper is an attempt to meet the needs of those teachers, - to present the problems in systematic order so that their planning may anticipate all of the necessary activities.

Delimitations

The scope of this study has necessarily been limited. Many volumes have been written on Play Production. To present every phase of Play Production in detail would be impossible in a limited paper. Therefore, the scope of this study is broad in a general sense, but limited as to detail. Although the values of dramatics have been presented in general, it has not been possible to show the specific value to the child in every phase of Play Production. In order to present an "over-all" picture of the teacher as play director, the part of the student has not been stressed, and may, in some instances, seem secondary. This is a delimitation, and should be considered as such, as the student, of course, should be the vital consideration.

No attempt has been made to give detailed information in the phases of production, i.e. scenery, properties, costumes, lighting and make-up. The writer has been limited to a presentation of only a few of the fundamentals in these phases.

The paper is also limited as to methods used in the teaching of dramatics in the class room. While mention is made of classroom dramatics, the emphasis has been

placed on that phase of dramatics which takes teacher and students out of the classroom and places them in the auditorium, on the stage, in the shops, and in the art departments of the school.

Definitions

Stage terms are numerous. The writer has, so far as possible, not presented, without a brief explanation, any terms which might be unfamiliar to the layman. Where such explanations would disrupt the thought, the paper has been annotated as to preceding and succeeding explanations or definitions. A glossary of stage terms has been included in the Appendices.

The reader should have a clear understanding of the terms "dramatics" and "play production." Dramatics may be divided into two classes: informal and formal. Informal dramatics may include that which is creative and that which is memorized but not presented to an audience. Formal dramatics includes, as one of its many purposes, the production of a play for an audience. It is under this latter classification that "play production" falls. Producing the play includes teachers and students in every phase of production from choosing the play to presenting it to the audience.

CHAPTER II

THE EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF DRAMATICS

By what rights should dramatics be admitted to the curriculum of any secondary school? What does the study of dramatics do for a student - externally, internally, emotionally? Is there any justification in saying that dramatics as a study contributes to the growth of personality? To what degree, actually, will dramatic study in the schools lead a community to higher aesthetic standards?

These questions and others must be answered satisfactorily before all administrators and educators are convinced that dramatics in the school can have an intrinsic value. However, the fact that many progressive schools have given dramatics an equal place among other subjects shows that its use has proved to be of strong educational value. Dramatics is no longer a "frill" subject and is fast leaving the extra-curricular field to find its place of equality among other subjects. The old Puritanic viewpoint toward dramatics is being replaced with one of respect. Why is this change taking place? Can dramatics do more for the child to-day than it could in the past? No, the change is not in the subject matter itself, but in the viewpoint of the educator. The old attitude of many educators was that dramatics was "play," affording the children pleasure, but having no educational value. Today, the attitude toward "play"

has changed. It is recognized as a vital force in the educational process of the child. Read any modern book on psychology or psychiatry and see what it has to say about "play" and "play therapy." An interesting study, indeed! This paper is too limited, however, to enter into a detailed discussion of the therapeutic value of play. The change of attitude, as discussed here, deals with the needs of the child. The modern educator believes that the child must be given experiences which meet his needs. How does the study of dramatics fit into this concept?

First, dramatization is natural to the child. Watch the child who is unconsciously dramatizing, - unaware of an audience. His play is spontaneous, imaginative, - a perfect example of creative drama. Witnessing such play will convince the educator "that dramatization is inherent in the child's nature, and impersonation an instinctive art."[1] This, however, does not fully answer the question, "What needs of the child are fulfilled through participation in dramatics?" The answer indicates at least four very strong needs: 1. The need of belonging, 2. The need for a sense of achievement, 3. The need for a share in making decisions, and 4. The need for integration in attitudes, beliefs, and values.

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1. Gertrude Hartman and Ann Shumaker, Creative Expression, p. 259. Milwaukee, Wis.: E.M. Hale and Company, 1939.

The writer will, throughout this paper, show various ways in which the above needs are met through participation in dramatics. Since dramatics is inclusive of all the arts and of those less tangible but loftier ideals and goals such as co-operation, self-development, and human relations, it is impossible to explain fully in brief statements, how it meets the needs of the child. However, a few brief statements must suffice at this point. The interested reader will discern the fuller answers as he goes vicariously through the many experiences of play production throughout the other chapters of this paper.

The Need of Belonging. No experience, perhaps, gives the child a stronger feeling of belonging than does participation in the production of a play. Whether he is a member of the cast, a member of a production crew, or house manager, he realizes that the part he plays is vital to the success of the whole. A thorough study of play production shows what a finely woven net of co-operation its organization becomes. No task is duplicated, yet each is an integral part of the other. Through such an experience the child naturally feels that he is a vital member of the group. He realizes that much depends on the part he performs, but, better still, he subjugates himself to the good of the whole. Alice Minnie Herts, who so ably planted the roots for children's educational dramatics in America, said:

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> This interchange of duties and the necessity of equal intelligence and respect for obligation in the performance of a minor as in that of a major role proved to be fine moral stimululus. The unified effort not to the end of personal triumph or glorification but for the production as a whole and all for presentation to others, the coming together to give something rather than to get something, made for genuine altruism. It was a practical training which not only suggested ideals of civic duty, but helped the player to put such ideals into practice.
>
> To respect the rights of others in whatever capacity the others served, to work for self-improvement and bredth of vision with a view to offering interesting results to an audience, to understand the other man's point of view because of having served in the same capacity and regarded life from the same standpoint as he, was to realize in performance, not in theory, the true responsibilities of citizenship.[1]

The Need for a Sense of Achievement. Dramatics offers a wide field for achievement. Winifred Ward, who has done such excellent work for the schools of Evanston, Illinois, says:

> In modern schools drama is often the meeting place, not only for all the arts, but for academic subjects as well. . . . Social science, arts and crafts, music, physical education, home economics, and other subjects may all be integrated into one dramatic project.[2]

With such a wide field from which to choose, any child can find an experience through which he achieves success not only in his own individual task but in the greater combination of the experiences of the whole

1. Alice Minnie Herts, The Children's Educational Theatre, pp. 61-62. New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1911.

2. Winifred Ward, Playmaking with Children, pp. 11-12. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1947.

group.

> The art of the theatre is not an individual art; it is essentially a group art, in which the author, the director, the scenic artist, the actors, the musicians, the stage crew, and even the audience all contribute to a common creative effort.[1]

Therefore, each child may find the place in which he can use his own particular talents. In fulfilling his own part, he satisfies the need for achievement both for himself and for the group. As the reader follows through the steps of play production, he will see that the child may satisfy this sense of achievement in many ways, e.g. planning, organizing, directing, designing scenery, building scenery, designing costumes, making costumes, lighting the stage, gathering properties, making properties, and of course, acting. Unless the reader already has an understanding of the value of dramatics, reading the above list will not be convincing enough. He must follow through the steps, and become saturated with the true worth of each experience, within the whole experience, in order to understand how dramatics may be the core from which many channels of achievement may grow.

The Need for a Share in Making Decisions. There is no better experience in which it is necessary for the child to make unselfish decisions than the experience of producing a play. Make decisions he must, but his decisions must coincide with those of the group. Each is responsi-

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1. John Dolman, Jr., The Art of Play Production, p. 2. New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1946.

ble for his own task; therefore, decisions must be made regarding his own part of the project. However, the good of the whole must be kept in mind; therefore, director, crew managers, actors, and committee chairmen must discuss, ponder, and weigh the scales of decision. Then, there are the quick decisions which must be made in emergencies, especially at the final performance of the play. Here, each individual must decide quickly and act so that his own performance will near perfection, but at the same time his decision must not be detrimental to the part played by other members of the group.

The Need for Integration in Attitudes, Beliefs, and Values. This need has already been touched upon in the above paragraphs. Ann Shumaker, in Creative Expression, says:

> It has often been pointed out that dramatic activities offer a singularly fruitful synthesis of all the arts, an integration of intellectual, emotional, and physical aspects of experience in an expression that is at once intensely personal and broadly social![1]

Caroline Pratt, in the same book, says:

> Perhaps the greatest value of dramatics . . . lies in the opportunity it offers to children to produce an organized picture of which they themselves are the media.[2]

It is true that a very skilful teacher is needed to guide children toward an integration of attitudes,

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1. Hartman and Shumaker, op. cit., p. 256.

2. Ibid., p. 265.

beliefs, and values. Perhaps the fact that the teaching of dramatics has so often been thrust upon the untrained teacher accounts for the fact that these needs have not been satisfied, and that the administrators have not seen the true value of dramatics in the schools. But the trained teacher, who knows her media, can and does guide the children toward that integration of attitudes, beliefs, and values which so ultimately leads to a true democracy.

Dramatics, used as a core of experiences, may stimulate the child to understand his fellowman to a greater extent. Such understanding will lead to an appreciation of people and of life itself. Educators who are trained in the speech arts have long known that this is true, but their voices have been in the minority. As more educators join the ranks of the trained dramatics teacher, however, the chorus is swelling, and educators and administrators everywhere are awaking to the potentialities of dramatics as a springboard for the maximum activities and experiences which are believed so vital to the growth of the child.

It has been said that "drama is the welding of all the arts into one unit."[1] Attention shall now be given to the value of the phases and activities which make up the united whole in the art of play production.

Drama opens many avenues for development. Art,

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1. Leslie Crump, Directing for the Amateur Stage, p. 3. New York: Dodd Mead & Company, 1935.

literature, speech, music, color, form and motion are its media. Thus, no child is excluded from some branch of the project. In fact every child finds a vital interest in at least one phase of the work done in children's dramatics. Even the shy, timid child finds a medium here which no other subject offers. He may be too self-conscious to express himself as he would like to do in every day life. But, when he loses himself in the characterization of an imaginary person, he expresses all the emotions that he has stored and locked within himself. Gradually, he gains self reliance. So the proper use of the dramatic instinct may release the shy child from self-consciousness and give him the opportunity to come in contact with all humanity.

> Indeed, it is the self-conscious child who needs this experience most. At least one of our children, whose lack of self-confidence made her enough of a problem to cause her parents to consult a psychiatrist, improved radically after taking part in a play. She found that her ability to use color with effect was a real help in the construction of the scenery, that others were willing to cooperate with her and looked to her for advice, and this seemed to give her the stimulus to carry through a piece of work in a way that she had never been able to do before.[1]

The above illustration shows a valuable outcome through but one of the many avenues of experience provided by dramatics. Glimpse down some of the many avenues which drama opens for the development of the child. The study of dramatics broadens and deepens the insight

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1. Hartman and Shumaker, op. cit., p. 285.

into human nature. Through the careful study which is necessary for the production of a play comes analysis and interpretation of characters. Through this analysis and interpretation an understanding of people develops. The intimate knowledge of any good play not only broadens the student's knowledge of human beings but deepens his interest in them. Thus, through the study and production of carefully chosen plays, the student may be initiated to the highest study of mankind, - man himself. Such a study may be invaluable in guiding his reactions in human relations throughout his entire life.

Experiences in dramatics give the students an opportunity to adjust and adapt themselves to real life situations. Life <u>is</u> drama; drama <u>is</u> life. Therefore, the real life situations of plays give the students many opportunities of vicariously living in and meeting situations which require physical, mental, and emotional adjustments and adaptations. This experience of meeting life situations through drama is a wholesome media for the development of desirable personality traits.

> Through the exercise of these elements the young explorer finds significance in things, builds up a consciousness of meaning, lays the foundation of his personality, and begins the framework of his social self. Imitation is the door through which the actor on the stage enters into the lives of others. It is the doorway through which the child enters into life situations. 'All the world's a stage' is more than a speech in a play; it is a far-reaching truth.[1]

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1. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 305.

Drama is no respector of persons; to the contrary, it includes all persons; the child slow to comprehend, the alert, intelligent child; the child lacking a rich, cultural background, the child surrounded by all that is beautiful and good; the unwanted child, the loved child; the plain child, the beautiful child; all, - regardless of creed, race, or social standing are included in this altruistic study of drama. The dramatic instinct is a universal impulse. What better media could there be for character building? Dramatics, properly developed, may be a great educational asset. It may implant ideals of true democracy by building fine attitudes and appreciations, training the imagination, and inspiring students with love and respect for high standards and ideals. Dramatics is an important media which should not be overlooked for developing self-reliant, altruistic, citizens.

The necessity to understand the plays and to sympathize with the characters also developes the child's imagination. If one would have beauty in his life, he must also have imagination. Without the aid of imagination, the intellect becomes colorless, barren, and mechanical. The germ of human sympathy is at the root of the child's desire to act. Thus, by using the dramatic instinct, the imagination may be developed along the right lines. Imagination is one of the basic forces of life. By proper cultivation it may be made an educational force. Through the dramatic form of good litera-

ture, imagination may develop character, broaden sympathy, and quicken the mind.

> . . . every child . . . is gifted and endowed with the great heritage of imagination, the warp and woof of which is woven of dramatic instinct. It is among the basic forces whereby God shapes humanity, and through it is indeed caught a reflection of God in man . . . Through proper cultivation it may be made a force in education so far-reaching that under its organized impulse the entire character may be developed, mind quickened, sympathies broadened, ambitions enobled, and bodies lifted and remade.[1]

Through the study of dramatics, the students may also learn to analyze, interpret, and assimilate the emotional content of the drama. "They imitate and live the emotional experiences of the characters they are portraying, and in turn cultivate their own powers of expressing emotions."[2] Thus, participation in dramatics provides a wholesome outlet for emotions. By becoming for a short time "another person" the student experiences many emotions which might otherwise be foreign to him, thus he is enriched with a better understanding for others. He not only learns to express his emotions (which our psychologists tell us is necessary) but he learns to control his emotions. He learns the value of expression and the value of restraint. This can be learned only through the experience of directing his emotions and curbing them at will. What subject pro-

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1. Herts, op. cit., pp. 66-67.

2. Wilhelmina G. Hedde and William Norwood Brigance, American Speech. p. 472. Chicago: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1942.

vides better and more varied experiences for such expression and restraint than dramatics?

Drama is the most human of all the arts because it includes speech and bodily expression. A person can never get away from himself. Wherever he goes he must take his voice, his speech habits, and his bodily movements with him. If the tones of his voice are unattractive, harsh, thin, glutteral, or nasal, he will not attract others to him, no matter where he goes. Poor pronunciation will not admit him to the well educated or well cultured circles. Slovenly enunciation will turn people from him in bewilderment or boredom. These closed doors will, in turn, bring about self-consciousness, lack of confidence and poise, and finally fear and an inferiority complex. Yes, such results carry even into one's ordinary conversation. This is not an exaggeration. Many retiring, quiet people refrain from conversing because they have had such experiences in earlier life. The good teacher of dramatics is able to break down or prevent such complexes by careful guidance and by putting a record of successful experiences behind the pupils.

Many prominent citizens have said that speech training has done more to develop confidence, poise, and the ability to meet people than all the rest of their training put together. This being true, it seems obvious that the school is the place to guide the children in

making this acquirement. The spoken word is used in all the attainments of life, and in every form of human relationship, therefore, every individual should be trained to use it well. Can any person who has watched children in an educational dramatics class doubt the value of this experience in training the voice and diction? Children's dramatics stimulates the child with a need of and a desire for good speech. Through this medium, he becomes conscious of grammar, voice and diction. No amount of memorizing will impress the rules of grammar upon the child's mind as strongly as the fact that he does not wish to misuse a word before an audience. In recent years, educators have learned that pleasurable methods of teaching and learning can also be thorough. The child mind is not only quickened through pleasurable methods of learning, but it retains the subject matter to a far greater degree. Drama furnishes a natural setting for the unconscious learning of oral English and the training of the speaking voice.

Through the vicarious experiences in drama, children also receive practice in graceful gesture and carriage of body. A graceful body is a personal asset. If one's lips do not speak, his poise and expression speak for him. A graceful body can be acquired only through practice in many different situations. Drama is so close to life that it gives the child many social situations in which he may exercise bodily poise. To interpret

character, the child must first visualize the circumstances in which the character is placed. He must then visualize the reactions which that particular character would have in these circumstances.

> The expressive actions of man are essentially dramatic, intensifying the meanings of words. They reveal the sensations, emotions, habits, and characteristics of man, his relation to his environment, to himself, and to other human beings.[1]

Every experience educates. In what better situation can the child find freedom in bodily expression than in those situations offered through the drama and its allied arts?

> Without fear of ridicule he can express his feelings in one vivid experience after another. They are vicarious experiences, it is true, but they are real enough to afford him much genuine satisfaction.[2]

The ease of movement, poise, and good posture, which result from experiences in acting, prepare the child to be at ease and to appear well with his fellowman.

The dramatic medium is attractive and stimulating to the child; therefore, it is a powerful force. He may learn through experiences in dramatics those things which he would never learn through the dull, uninteresting presentation of isolated subjects. Just as the English class finds it a great advantage to transpose the

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1. Florence Lutz, The Technique of Pantomime, p. 2. Berkely, Cal.: The Sather Gate Book Shop, 1927.

2. Winifred Ward, Creative Dramatics, p. 9. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1930.

literature to dramatic form, so does the history class, the geography class, the science class, and even the mathematics class. Wherever it is possible for the teacher to use the dramatic form, she finds it quickens the enthusiasm for learning.

> During the progress of almost every unit of work, there comes a place where dramatization is a definite help; it may be a way of gaining a deeper understanding of an historical period, or as the culmination of the work on the project, or, as a means of establishing a new point of view.[1]

History especially lends itself to the dramatic form. How much more quickly the children learn the historical facts when they play the parts of the heroes themselves; then history becomes a part of the child just as literature does. He remembers the facts because he is vitally interested in reproducing them. Through the making of period costumes, the child also gains much information about historical dress. Likewise, through the making of scenery and the setting of historical plays he learns much of the architecture and furnishing of homes in different periods.

> Dramatics and dramatic interpretation vitalize literature, history, civics, geography, and the ancient and modern languages. Biography becomes alive through the vivifying of dramatic incidents in the lives of outstanding characters. Art, manual training, home economics, oral English, public speaking, and music are intensely motivated through the demands which stagecraft and dramatic presentation make upon them. Subject matter

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1. Hartman and Shumaker, op. cit., p. 284

> becomes more attractive, there is better comprehension of dramatic stories, and pupils have abundant opportunity to visualize scenes far away in time or space, reconstruct them mentally, and then act them out.[1]

Thus, the dramatic instinct, always strong in childhood and adolescence, will create an interest in the beautiful and best in art, literature, music, speech, and drama. Participation in dramatics will provide wholesome recreation; develop artistic taste, and educate children for a wholesome use of leisure time. Think of the many adults who choose their pleasures so indiscriminately. Had they been trained in childhood to appreciate the beautiful in art, music, and drama, they would not accept the cheap type of amusement which is so often offered them. They would turn from it to the type of recreation which would give them beauty, art, and joy. A majority of adults demanding the best in all channels of recreation would bring about a decided change and most certainly would raise the standard of amusements. This change will not take place until the children are taught to love the best in art.

The children are hungry for the drama which is their natural birthright. American has been feeding them, for the most part, on husks with the movies. It is a lamentable thought to consider the thousands of children who are satisfying their hunger for the theatre

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1. Alexander Crippen Roberts and Edgar Marian Draper, Extraclass and Intramural Activities in High Schools, p. 232. New York: D.C. Heath and Company, 1928.

with the adult emotions and passions of present day movies. Edward Yeomans, in Shackled Youth, says:

> When you proceed to substitute for these highly nutritive things fairy stories, fables, myths, and folk-tales the feverish stupidity of the standard moving-picture shows, censored or not, and the defilements of the sensational theatres, you proceed to destroy souls. All the green shoots of imagination, from which alone have ever come any harvests of creative ability, are ironed out and scorched.[1]

Educational dramatics teaches the child to be an intelligent observer of the drama. He may be critical, but he is sympathetic. He may demand the best, but he is courteous. The education of the audience is considered as much a part of the work of the children's theatre as the education of those who participate in the production of the play. Because the child's point of view is always kept in mind in choosing and directing the plays for children's educational dramatics, the children are developing a love of the theatre. More important, however, is the development of a sense of discrimination in the theatre's offerings. The pupils through participation in the best of drama acquire not only standards for judging plays, but the highest standards. This discrimination, on the part of the children, will influence the tone of the American theatre for many years to come.

Other chapters will deal with the many activities

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1. Edward Yeomans, Shackled Youth, p. 87. Boston: The Atlantic Monthly Press, 1921.

and experiences which may be the outcome of play production. Therefore, they will be very briefly mentioned here. To the uniformed person, it may be surprising to find how many children may participate in the experiences involved in the production of one play. As has already been mentioned, the arts and crafts have a place in the children's dramatics.

> Every successful play has been dependent upon a competent, well-organized, and numerous stage force, under the capable direction of faculty men, usually from the technical department of the high school. A group of electricians, scene shifters, and property men, as well trained for their work as the actors themselves is essential for a smooth performance. . . . Make-up committee, publicity and finance committees, music committees, and special committees, each group has a part without which the entire performance would be marred.[1]

The construction of a stage set becomes a group problem. Thus, those children who have manual skill and artistic taste are given an opportunity to take part in the project. The children who like to saw, hammer, and nail are in their element in building the set. The interested woodwork teacher will take advantage of this enthusiasm, for the child will listen much more eagerly to instructions when he is building something in which he has a real interest. The children who have artistic ability are happy in designing, painting, and decorating the set. The art teacher will find his suggestions and guidance eagerly sought and readily taken, for the child is

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1. Roberts and Draper, op. cit., p. 241.

painting with a definite purpose. He is trying to put over a piece of work which must meet a standard in order to be acceptable.

Costuming a play is educational in numerous ways. The child has a purpose for designing and cutting. He becomes absorbed in combining colors and materials. He creates fantastic as well as practical apparel. Through this absorbing occupation he is learning to sew.

Even the children who promise to be electricians have an opportunity to develop in the children's theatre. Does not the lighting of a play produce an important effect? Much can be learned from stage lighting and fortunate is the child who receives the training. Lillian Foster Collins, in discussing the organization of the school theatre, says:

> Even the juvenile reporters on the school paper participate, for they write the play up. The press notices can be displayed on a bulletin board in the drama office. How proudly is the increasing accumulation of clippings watched! And when a play is heralded in the town or city newspaper, there are no bounds to the elation that is felt by every one having the slightest connection with the production. Sometimes in only a few cases will the same child be found working in more than one branch of the activity. Then the event of a play can be made to be felt far throughout the school. It is amazing what zest goes into the making of a cupboard or a dress that is to be seen upon the stage by one's classmates, one's teachers, and possibly one's parents.[1]

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1. Lillian Foster Collins, The Little Theatre in School, p. 22. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1930.

It would be difficult to say which experience in the production of a play offers the ultimate opportunity for co-operation. Take, for example, the property crew. This group must not only gather and construct necessary properties, but they must be responsible for having them in the right places. Some of the properties must be placed in exact positions on stage before scenes. Some must be ready to be placed in the actors' hands at precisely the right moment before an entrance. All this requires planning and organization. And last, but not least in importance, is the responsibility of storing the properties, and of returning borrowed properties.

Neither is the shifting of scenery an insignificant experience. Quick changes require planning, organization, exactness, accuracy and alertness. Numerous activities go into the unification of this experience.

The success of the play may be enhanced or marred by the make-up. This crew, then, takes its place of importance with the others. Careful scheduling of the actors for the application of make-up is necessary. Lack of organization in this matter has too often resulted in the fact that characters for the last act are made up and ready while a character in the first act must be rushed onto the stage with his make-up only half applied. If the members of this crew are to apply the make-up to the characters, they must study the art of make-up, and know the effects of the lights, shadows,

and colors of modern stage lighting upon it. They must know the difference between straight make-up and character make-up. Certainly, they must know the tools with which they work.

Even the duties of the call boy are important. He must check the time accurately, make his calls promptly, and be sure that the actors hear his calls.

The curtain puller, likewise, holds a responsible position. What can be worse than a late curtain on a tense scene or on a tableau? The actors are apt to lose character and turn the tragic or the beautiful into a farce. The person holding this position must know the difference between a fast curtain and a slow curtain, and he must know the proper time for each.

The work of the house committee is vital to the success of the final performance. Their work is of a different nature, but equally as important. They must do all that is within their power to assure an audience for the performance. Their work may involve the make-up and selling of tickets; the planning and printing of programs; the ushering and seating of the people; and the ventilation (so often forgotten) of the auditorium. This group must also work in close collaboration with the publicity committee.

The reader may say, "If this is to be a handbook of practical help to the teacher of dramatics why so lengthy a chapter on the value of dramatics"? Those who under-

stand the real values of dramatics know that the writer has only touched upon some values and has omitted many others. The person entering this field of teaching, will soon find that it is very practical indeed to be able to present these values to an unbelieving principal. Having convinced the principal, he will need more ammunition for convincing those doubting Thomases on the faculty. And certainly, he will need to have these values well organized in his own mind in order to convince a doubting supervisor or superintendent that dramatics do belong in the school curriculum.

Summary. Children's dramatics provide educational experiences through which pupils have many needs fulfilled. Participation in dramatics educates the child in the best sense of the word for it gives him the opportunity to experience a feeling for others and with others; it leads him to a better understanding of the values of life; it trains him in poise and graceful expression; and it teaches him to think for himself. "There can be no better education than intimate contact with great thoughts adequately expressed."[1] It is the personal contact with the great thoughts and expressions of the past that has made the drama so decidedly educational. Because children live these thoughts and expressions in their portrayal of the characters they assume, the

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1. Herts, op. cit., p. 137

thoughts and expressions stay with them throughout life. By drawing from his mental storehouse the thoughts and expressions which have come from the best in literature, the child has a firm foundation on which to base his own opinions. A genuine education is the one which makes students think for themselves. Not only do the principles which are found in the best literature remain in the child's mind, but by putting these principals into action the child unconsciously forms character. So children's educational dramatics, to a great extent, gives the child an opportunity to understand and to express, as far as he can, the meaning of great thoughts.

Throughout all the work of the children's theatre, the pupils are trained to be intelligent in following directions and adaptable in performing tasks required of them. By creating a high standard of production, the children feel a responsibility toward their work. This feeling of responsibility in turn brings habits of promptness, exactness, and resourcefulness. By an interchange of duties, the children learn to respect the minor as well as the major role. They find it necessary to have an equal intelligence of all duties, great or small. They respect the job done by each fellow student because they understand it and realize that each small task makes for the beauty of the whole production. Therefore, the true responsibilities of citizenship are taught in the children's theatre.

Dramatics is a vital, unifying influence of all school activities. It combines many specific activities, and provides opportunity for the co-operation of many departments of instruction. It includes many pupils, and provides experiences which meet the needs of a variety of talent. In short, it is the medium for a "working school" instead of a "listening school." Through the medium of dramatics, the pupils are truly living while they are being educated.

It not only is an approach to the entire student body, but it opens the way to, and invites participation of the entire community. Dramatics can be a far-reaching influence into the homes and community, fostering understanding and co-operation. It may also be a vital force in lifting the standards of artistic appreciation in the community.

Dramatics also offers the teacher a unique opportunity. It allows him to get closer to the child, - to find out important things about him. Nowhere is the sharing of common interests among students and teacher better realized. Through this sharing comes understanding and respect of pupil and teacher, each for the other. This avenue of understanding, on the part of the teacher, may lead to higher levels of guidance and teaching.

> If dramatics is used, not to train "stars" and to impress parents, but to help each child to develop his powers to the utmost, the result will be improved social adjustment, a sense of responsibility, and above all, happiness.[1]

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1. Hartman and Shumaker, op. cit., p. 285.

CHAPTER III

THE TEACHER-DIRECTOR

It has been stated that the study of formal dramatics may serve as a core of many meaningful experiences for adolescents; that it offers training in many valuable ways, both practical and aesthetic; and that it is the synthesis of the arts. Who, then, should teach this subject in the school? Certainly such an all inclusive subject requires a trained teacher.

A genuine interest in the work should be the first requisite, for in addition to the skills and artistry required, the work is strenuous and tedious, requiring the utmost patience. Too often, the production of a play has been thrust upon a teacher, - usually the English teacher. This is a grave mistake and has been one of the reasons that educators and administrators have overlooked the educational values in the teaching of dramatics. The teacher who has the school play thrust upon him does not teach dramatics. He simply does the best he can to get a performance ready by a certain deadline. The English teacher may love good literature, but he may, if untrained in the art of teaching dramatics, commit all the crimes which lead to the death of the love of good literature in the heart of the adolescent. A genuine interest, - a zeal for creating and encouraging growth, and love for the beautiful should be the uppermost qualities of the dramatics teacher, but he needs

more than these. He must be scholar, teacher, and artist combined.

> It is not possible for a part-time teacher of English or of any other subject to obtain worthwhile results when only a divided attention can be given, for such a directorship is a full job in itself and very often it is a job and a half.[1]

It is the work of the teacher-director to study and prepare the play for performance[2], to teach and rehearse the players[3], and to direct and guide the technical preparation for putting the play on the stage[4].

> He directs its interpretation from start to finish . . .
>
> > What the producer needs to know about the stage amounts exactly to everything there is to know. As he has to employ the material available to get the required result he must necessarily know how to use it. He has to understand acting, the designing of scenery and costumes, the use of lighting, and how to get any effect the play requires. He must also be able to interpret the play as a dramatic work of the theatre, which means that he must be an artist, what we may call an artist of the theatre.[5]

The limitations of this paper do not allow for a detailed discussion of the director as artist. The reader may be interested in reading John Dolman's discussion of this subject in the introductory chapter of his book, The

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1. Collins, op. cit., p. 10.

2. Infra, Chapter VI.

3. Infra, Chapter VIII.

4. Infra, Chapters IX-XIII.

5. Charles Benjamine Purdom, Producing Plays, pp. 4-5. New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1930.

Art of Play Production.[1] Since the director is the only person concerned who studies the play from every angle, both aesthetic and technical, it is he alone who can unite and blend the parts into a perfect, artistic whole. The director is responsible for the finished production, - a picture, - a living, moving, vibrating picture of life. He discovers and brings to life the author's meaning and the spirit of the play. In doing so, he becomes a creative artist.

> In the study of the play and the planning of the production the director is first of all an artist, and as an artist he must continue to function until the finished performance leaves his hands. But with the assembling of the cast and the start of actual rehearsals he begins to function also as a teacher, . . .[2]
>
> In the stage of the school he should be a teacher with the ability to draw the best from his actors and grow while training them in efficient, artistic, and successful dramatic activity.[3]

To say that the director must be a real teacher may be making a statement too broad to be comprehensive. The person who has seen a real teacher at work knows what is meant, but he finds there is an intangible element which is difficult to define. Suffice it to say, then, that the teacher of dramatics cannot be one who is "marking time" in the schoolroom, or one who depends on the

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1. Dolman, op. cit., Chap. I.

2. Ibid., p. 165.

3. Katharine Anne Ommanney, The Stage and the School, p. 278. New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1939.

"artificial teacher manner" which is so often used in the classroom. In producing a play, the teacher is going to leave the classroom. He is going to be human and understanding; he is going to be sympathetic and tolerant; he is going to be one of the group; and he is going to be called upon to exercise his sense of humor. But, at the same time, he must be poised and intelligent, dignified and respected.

> The kinds of attitudes a teacher builds in her pupils have been determined long before she starts to teach. What she is and what her background has been count more in deciding her success or failure than any possible combination of teaching conditions, favorable or unfavorable.
>
> To win the respect of her pupils she must, first of all, be master of her subject. She must know far more of it than she teaches. The greater her natural ability, the richer her knowledge of life and of literature, and the keener her understanding of the way to teach children, the deeper will be the impression she will make on those who take her courses.[1]

The students must have confidence in the teacher-director. He is their director, but he is also their leader. The intelligent blending of directorship and leadership is one of the qualities which makes successful teaching in play production possible. The teacher is not able to direct, nor is he capable of leadership if he is not sure of himself, and of his knowledge of the subject. Students have no confidence in a teacher who lacks confidence in himself. Then what characteris-

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1. Ward, Creative Dramatics, p. 18.

ties, what knowledge, and skills should the dramatics teacher possess? The following list enumerates some of the general and specific qualifications which are necessary.

In general, the teacher-director should have:

1. some practical experience in teaching children.
2. a general knowledge of other subjects in the curriculum and the place of dramatics among these subjects.
3. a sympathetic understanding of the modern objectives and methods of teaching.
4. an understanding of the recent thinking in psychology.
5. flexible principles which are adaptable to the singularities of various groups of children.
6. a genuine love for adolescents and an understanding of their particular cycle of life.
7. a high standard for and fine ideals of truth and justice.
8. qualities of good breeding which express genuine courtesy, kindness, and consideration.
9. emotional endowments and sensitivity which are not turned inward but used for the good of others.
10. an ability to judge himself impersonally.
11. the ability to change his point of view if necessary.
12. a delicate sense of humor which is discriminating in appreciation of wit, comedy, and farce.
13. an understanding of human relations and the ability to handle human beings.
14. a sympathetic understanding of the child's viewpoint and the ability to see through his eyes.

15. a high sense of values and standards in life and in art.

16. the ability to observe intelligently.

17. the ability to guide pupils tactfully and intelligently.

18. the ability to correct and at the same time encourage the student to strive for improvement.

19. an unlimited degree of patience.

20. the willingness to explain the "why" to pupils.

21. good health, energy, and vitality.

Specifically, the teacher-director should have:

1. good judgment of, and a discriminating taste in the quality of plays backed by a knowledge and appreciation of the best in all children's literature.

2. a strong belief and an abounding faith in the value of the subject he teaches.

3. an imaginative power both creative and reproductive which will enable him to visualize the finished production and carry it to completion.

4. a thorough understanding of the dramatic impulse.

5. a natural dramatic ability to act.

6. an appreciation, and some knowledge of, and skill in the arts: music, dancing, design and color.

7. personal preparation and training in the speaking voice; a musical speaking voice, correct grammatical usage, and pure diction.

8. personal preparation and training in ease of bodily movement and grace of gesture.

9. a familiarity of types of people which might be represented in a play, and the manners, customs and speech peculiar to them.

10. an unbounded enthusiasm for the work he is doing.

11. some experience in the various phases of play production.

12. executive power and ability to delegate authority.

13. some technical knowledge of scenery and costume design; construction of scenery; costuming, stage lighting, make-up, and properties.

14. knowledge of and experience in organization of the production staff.

15. ability to handle backstage equipment.

16. knowledge of and ability to direct the business end of the production: budgeting the finances, box office, tickets, programs, house management, and publicity.

17. ability to guide the actors and teach acting, - not elocution.

The reader may say that no one person can possess all these qualifications. Perhaps not, he would be a rare person if he did, but these are the ideal qualifications for the teacher-director of dramatics in the school. Great care should be taken in the selection of such teachers and certainly definite training should be a part of their background. More than forty years ago, Minnie Alice Herts had a vision of the great educational value of dramatics. For seven years she made this vision a reality, but an even broader vision made her realize the necessity of training teachers for the work to be done. She said:

> A providential illness and necessary absence from work has provided the clearer vision which distance so frequently affords.

> This vision shows that what was done to meet a great and constantly increasing need forms but the nucleus of what is destined to become a national educational movement. . .
>
> The cost of Educational Theatre buildings and maintenance will naturally vary according to location and structure, but gradual development of this movement is always advisable, for the right director is far more imperative than the proper building and equipment.
>
> . . . If the pure, spontaneous, dramatic instinct of youth is used by untrained directors for the manufacture of Children's Theatres the new application of the educational principle, still in its infancy, will be grievously retarded.
>
> A vital branch of the first Educational Theatre still to be established with endowment, is a training-school for teachers in the theory and practice of play-producing as developed in the work of The Children's Educational Theatre during seven years, through the relation of dramatic instinct to character development. A building and subsidy, no matter how costly and suitable, would be valueless without trained teachers and expert play-producers with a full comprehensive knowledge of the right theory and practice of the work.[1]

Twenty years later, in their book on Play-Making and Plays, Merrill and Fleming stated:

> To do ideal work, a person must be highly gifted and highly trained and must be selected, as music and art instructors are chosen, because of special gifts and special training.[2]
>
> Play-making and acting are each an art, and to teach them demands even more skill than does the teaching of most other subjects.[3]

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1. Herts, op. cit., pp. 144-147.

2. John Merrill and Martha Fleming, Play-Making and Plays, p. 35. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1930.

3. Ibid., p. 37.

Some of the leading universities, to-day, are providing the training as well as the buildings and equipment of which Miss Herts dreamed. Trained teacher-directors are taking their places of equal importance with teachers of other subjects in the curriculum. The work of these teachers will be seen throughout the succeeding chapters of this paper. The director is an integral part of all the work discussed and cannot be removed from it.

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CHAPTER IV

ORGANIZATION OF THE PRODUCTION STAFF

Diligent co-operation and organization of a large personnel will be necessary to produce a play. The director, no matter how capable and efficient, cannot possibly perform all the necessary tasks which bring about the final production of a play. Few people realize how much varied talent goes into the making of a final performance. Certainly the group of actors alone does not produce the play. There are many other groups which perform widely varied tasks. For this reason, dramatics may well be called a core of student experiences.

A well organized production staff is like a smooth running piece of machinery. All of the groups working on the production of a play, except the actors, are a part of the production staff. Each group like a cog in the machine has its part to perform. Let one group be weak or faulty and the entire machine is affected. Since there are many jobs to be done, they must be distributed and the students to whom they are given must be depended upon. In general, the division of the groups is as follows:

1. Research Committee
2. Designing Committees
3. Stage Crew
4. Property Crew
5. Costume Crew
6. Make-up Crew
7. Lighting Crew

8. Publicity Committee
9. Business Committee
10. House Committee

Each crew or committee, of course, must be headed by a manager or chairman, and the director is the generalissimo of them all. The heads of the crews and committees are listed below and a brief description of their duties is given:

1. The Art Director: supervises the research on scenery and costume design, thus keeping these elements authentic to the period of the play; directs the group working on scene design; directs the group working on costume design; designs or assists in designing scenery and costumes; offers suggestions to property manager; harmonizes color of scenery, costumes, and properties; carries out, as far as possible, the ideas of and plans made by the director; consults with the director and crew managers for harmony and unity of opinion; turns final sketches, drawings, and paintings of scenery and costumes over to the stage manager and costume manager.

2. The Stage Manager: directs all backstage organization; directs the construction and painting of scenery; directs the shifting of scenery; sees that backstage areas are cleared for shifting of scenery and properties; receives notice from all other crew heads when their work is completed; sends time calls for actors to appear on stage; calls signals for opening of performance and for each act; directs opening and closing of

curtain; gives cues for lighting and sound effects; and directs striking and storing of scenery. He is in charge of the stage and is responsible for the smooth running of the show. He maintains quiet and order backstage at all times.

3. The Property Manager: makes out a property list and assigns duties to crew members; directs the assembling and placing of all stage equipment which is not considered scenery. (furniture, rugs, pictures, etc.); directs the assembling of all hand properties used by actors; directs the distribution, collecting and storing of hand props; directs making, renting, or borrowing of properties; oversees orderliness of property room; directs striking, returning, and storing of properties; supervises sweeping of stage floor; plans and directs sound and trick effects.

4. The Costume Manager: studies the costumes appropriate to the play; directs the making, repairing, and assembling of all costumes; supervises the pressing of costumes; directs the labeling of costumes; plans and oversees the distribution of the costumes to the actors; checks costumes from auditorium during dress rehearsal; checks on the returning of costumes by the actors; directs the storing of costumes or the returning of borrowed or rented costumes; directs the laundering of tights, etc.; sends soiled costumes to cleaners; directs the repairing of costumes.

5. The Lighting Manager: plans the lighting of the play; harmonizes the lighting with colors of costumes and scenery; works out all lighting arrangements; lists and purchases all necessary items; directs the setting and adjusting of all lights; supervises or runs the switchboard; directs the timing in light changes; directs necessary repairs on lighting equipment, checks for possible fire hazards; and supervises storing of lighting equipment.

6. The Make-up Manager: studies the types of make-up necessary for the play; purchases necessary supplies; directs make-up crew and/or actors in application of make-up; prepares make-up table for dress rehearsals and final performance, - lays out all necessary supplies; assigns place at make-up table for each actor; inspects final make-up of each character; instructs actors in the removal of make-up; checks on the removal of make-up; directs the "cleaning-up" of make-up room; directs the storing of make-up.

7. The Business Manager: assumes the responsibility of all expenditures and receipts; determines approximate financial resources available; determines the budget; plans and directs the printing and issuing of tickets; directs the ticket sales; keeps accurate records of tickets printed and sold; directs the printing or mimeographing of programs; makes sure all necessary

items are included on program; checks and supervises the box-office set-up; plans and directs use of seating chart for reserve seat ticket sales; keeps permanent records of all finances; and makes frequent reports to the director.

8. The House Manager: directs all duties relative to the auditorium; appoints ushers and ticket-takers; trains and directs the ushers; directs the distribution of programs; directs the taking of tickets; checks on lights in foyer or lobby as well as in auditorium; answers questions of patrons; inspires a friendly attitude; checks and directs the ventilation of the auditorium; makes sure auditorium is clean and dusted before performance; arranges for, and directs a rehearsal of the ushers; makes sure all exits are unobstructed and exit lights on; and arranges for seating of the orchestra.

9. The Publicity Chairman: plans interesting and novel ways of advertising the performance; directs all advertising; arranges for posters to be made by art department and other individuals; arranges for candid camera shots to be made during rehearsals; directs the display of posters and photographs; plans the making and directs the printing or mimeographing of handbills and streamers; arranges for and directs announcements, skits, and previews to be given in classes and assembly programs or over public address system; plans and arranges for

notices and pictures in the school paper and the daily newspaper; sends special notices to regular patrons.

These crew heads and chairmen must be efficient, dependable people. They assume the responsibilities which have been listed and delegate the duties to their crew members.

> The results produced by such an organization . . . will depend to a large extent upon the ability and conscientiousness of the individuals of which it is composed, but it will depend a good deal also upon a sensible division of labor, the delegation of responsibility, and finally, upon careful supervision. The director who insists on doing a lot of the technical work himself will wear himself out and never develop capable technicians. The chief of construction or the mistress of the wardrobe who is unable to delegate particular jobs and get them done by others, may become a martyr to the theatre, but in the long run is a liability rather than an asset. Theatrical production is a co-operative enterprise which functions best through the coordination of many small jobs, rather than through the titanic labors of one or two persons.[1]

The chart which is shown in Figure 1. (p. 44) may help to clarify the organization which is usually followed for formal play production.

The teacher-director in a school where dramatics has been established as a part of the curriculum for a number of years may have this organization worked out to a fine point. Teachers in schools where dramatics is being admitted to the curriculum for the first time must work up this organization gradually. Without training,

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1. Barnard Hewitt, Art and Craft of Play Production, p. 347. Chicago: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1940.

ORGANIZATION OF THE PRODUCTION STAFF

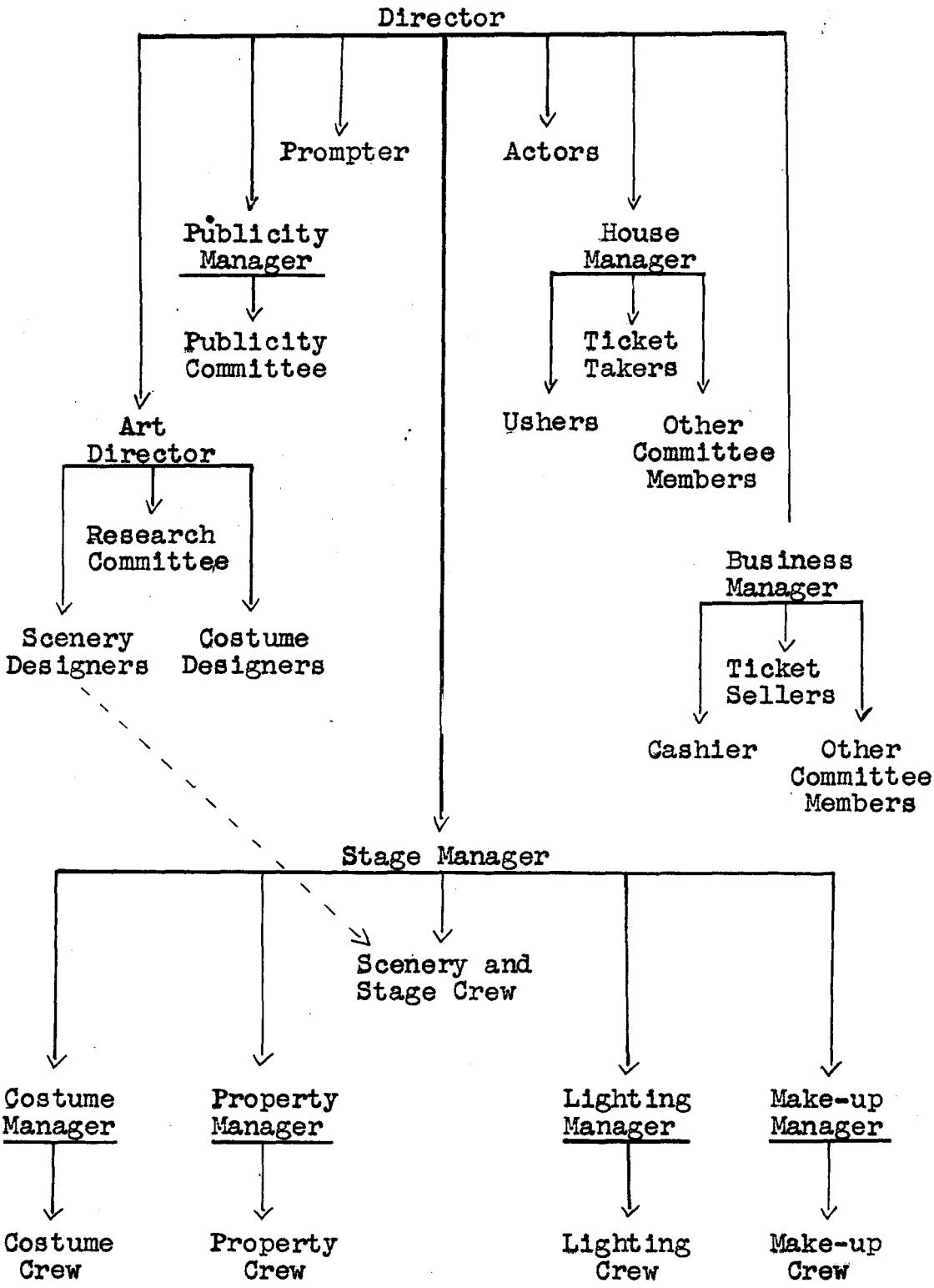
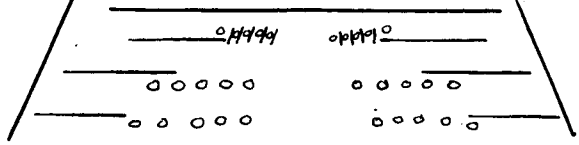


FIGURE 1. ORGANIZATION OF THE PRODUCTION STAFF

students cannot be expected to take over the full responsibilities of these duties. Therefore, in some instances, teachers or department heads may be asked to serve as crew managers until students have been trained through participation in the dramatics class. In any event, it is understood that special teachers in departments such as art, sewing, cabinet making, electricity, etc. will assist in the training and supervision of such work experiences.

One person who may be appointed to the production staff has not yet been discussed. This is the prompter. Some directors consider the services of the prompter invaluable; others prefer to dispense with the prompter altogether. If his duties are limited only to giving words to the actor who has, for the moment, forgotten them, then the writer agrees with the latter group. However, the duties of the prompter may be very broad indeed. Actually, the prompter should be an assistant to the director and in many schools he is so termed. He holds the script at all rehearsals, making notes and writing in the stage business wherever the director instructs him to do so. He makes note of all light, sound, and curtain cues on the script and marks the warning cues as well. An illustration of a page from the prompter's book is given in Figure 2 (p.46). The prompter makes other notes (not on the script) of things which the director wants him or others to do. All this relieves the



(Near the end of the song, Jack loses his wig, which, of course, ends the song.)

Jack loses his wig as he turns under Rose's arm

Warn Orchestra

All - Jack!!! All ↻ toward C. J picks up wig, is bewildered

Allen - You phoney!

Judy - I thought there was something funny about you! All pantomime as if talking excitedly.

Jane - Well, of all things!

Miss (Miss Adams rushes on stage.) E U L

Miss Adams - Jack Simmons, what is the meaning of this? I thought there was something peculiar about you from the moment Freda introduced you to me. Where is Freda?

Freda - (Coming forward) Here I am Miss Adams. Leaves dancing line, comes C

Miss Adams - Will you please explain . . .

Mr. Jones (Rushing on stage) Jack, I ought to have you expelled for this. There's no excuse good enough . . . E D L

Warn Curtain

Pantomime - All become more excited. X to C

Bob - (Coming forward, - interrupting.) Mr. Jones, please let me explain; it wasn't Jack's fault, - - or Freda's; I'm to blame. Leaves place on steps. Comes C

Triangular Grouping

Mr. Jones and Miss Adams - You?

Mr. Jones - There's no possible excuse! If you're involved, you'll have to be punished along with Jack and Freda. Come on to the office, all three of you. ↻ X to L

Jack - Please, Mr. Jones, could we talk with you privately first? following Mr. J.

Bob - Please, Mr. Jones, you see it's a little embarrassing . . . following J.

Freda - Mr. Jones, please listen to our story. following B

(Exit Mr. Jones, Jack, Bob, and Freda) All watch as if stunned.

FIGURE 2. A PAGE FROM A PROMPT BOOK

director of holding or looking at books or paper. The director may, therefore, concentrate on seeing and hearing the actors. The prompter will see that all is in readiness before a rehearsal begins. This, of course, may entail few or many duties, depending on the type of rehearsal and the necessary preparation for it. The prompter may run errands for the director; he may take messages to crew managers or actors. He may post notices and attend to many other petty details. He may hold group rehearsals as instructed by the director, or he may take over the rehearsal in the necessary absence of the director. In truth, the prompter is the director's right-hand man. He should always be on hand, ready and willing to do anything the director requests of him. This is a strenuous job, but one which offers invaluable experience and training in directing plays.

It is well to have the prompter follow the lines and prompt the players during rehearsals, especially at the beginning before the lines have been thoroughly memorized. This saves much wasted time. If the prompter is to be allowed to give lines during the final rehearsals and the performance, then a person of intelligence and good judgment must be selected. Nothing is worse than for the audience to hear the prompter's voice from off stage. Therefore, he must know <u>how</u> and <u>when</u> to prompt, if at all, and <u>how soon</u> to prompt if it <u>is</u> necessary. Many students (or even adults), in their zeal to

keep the show going, prompt immediately, and therefore, come in on pauses which are essential to the interpretation of the play. Of course the prompter who is used as the assistant and has attended all the rehearsals knows where these stage pauses occur and will not muff them. The voice quality of the prompter must also be considered, for while some prompter's speak too loudly and are heard by the audience, others cannot be heard at all. If the actors have been trained to depend on a prompter they should not be kept waiting while the prompter apparently "talks to himself." There is an art in prompting as in everything else. Of course, the prompter must follow the lines closely, never looking up or being interrupted. "Over the prompter's desk there should be a large and conspicuous sign: Do Not Talk to the Prompter!"[1] By thus keeping his eyes constantly on the lines he is ready to prompt at any time if necessary. He must know the play so well that in the event an actor skips lines or pages he can turn quickly to the place and continue to follow the lines.

If the director is afraid to trust the actors without the aid of a prompter, he cannot see the reverse point of view of doing without one. Generally, it is not really necessary to have a prompter give the forgotten lines. If the director has done his part thoroughly and the actors have co-operated throughout rehearsals, they

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1. Dolman, op. cit., p. 272.

are well prepared. When the actors have been trained not to speak as parrots, but to think the play through, they have become a part of it and can ad lib[1] until they are back on the track again. It is the writer's opinion that the use of a prompter makes the actors dependent upon him. Crump is of the same opinion:

> Do away with the prompters for dependence on their aid weakens the players. Make every actor on the stage responsible for the stage. Impress them with the fact that they know the play and that any change or blowup can be corrected simply and easily if the one with the next line uses common sense. A loud voice whispering from the side lines causes a dreadful inferiority complex in the entire cast. Something goes out of it and the performance becomes a nervous torture to the actors and the audience. The sympathetic response of the audience is lost and they are only aware of the unhappiness of the actors and await anxiously the next break. More often than not, the prompter's words are not heard or not understood by the actor who needs them; where many lines are similar the line given may mean nothing to the actor. If the play needs a prompter do not put it on for it is not ready for an audience.[2]

Without a prompter to depend upon, the actors seem more keen, more alert, and therefore they give a better performance.

For the dress rehearsals and final performance some directors use prompters to aid the electrician, stage manager, and property manager. Usually this is not necessary as crew members have been appointed to all the necessary duties.

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1. Infra, p. 211.

2. Crump, op. cit., pp. 227-228.

The work of the prompter has been discussed in more detail than the work of the stage managers and crews because their work will be given in succeeding chapters.[1]

It can easily be seen that the director should choose carefully and surround himself with dependable crew heads and committee chairmen.

> The division, delegation, and fixation of responsibility is the most essential part of organization back stage, . . . out of a truly co-operative spirit grows the best dramatic art. But in art as in politics, democracy, to be successful, must be organized; there must be not only a division of labor, but some subordination and a very definite fixation of responsibility.[2]

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1. Infra, Chapters IX - XIII.

2. Dolman, op. cit., p. 260.

CHAPTER V

SELECTING THE PLAY

The play chosen for any school production should be of the highest type of dramatic literature. This does not mean that it must always be serious. It may be tragedy, melodrama, comedy, or farce, but it must be worth while. Naturally the teacher-director will wish to build up a record of productions of which he can be genuinely proud. The first essential is the choice of a good play. This is not so simple as it sounds for there are many elements to consider. First, is the purpose of the play. The discussion of this paper, as has been previously stated, is limited to formal dramatics. Of course, there are formal dramatics in which no audience participates. The choice of a play for such a group of actors would allow a much wider range of selection than one which must appeal to an audience. Students may study plays and perform them for the purpose of developing talent, personality, character, or for the purpose of gaining a better understanding of human nature. On the other hand, students may write their own dramatization, memorize the lines, and act them out (thus using formal dramatics) as a culmination of an experience unit. For such purposes the teacher will either select, or guide the students to select a play of high literary value which will suit their needs, but it need not necessarily have audience appeal. The discussion which fol-

lows pertains to the selection of a play which will ultimately be produced for an audience.

In choosing such a play the teacher-director must constantly keep in mind the ability of the student-actors, and the stage and equipment available, as well as the type of audience. The teacher who has done extensive reading and is familiar with many plays by the best authors is, of course, better prepared to choose a play which suits his purpose. Is the purpose of the production solely to entertain, - or does it involve raising the standards of an audience and giving many pupils an opportunity to develop through the various phases of play production? Heaven forbid that it be solely for the purpose of raising money! Leslie Crump in his book, Directing for the Amateur Stage, says:

> Let us choose a great play rather than a clever one. . . . Dramatics to the non-professional should be much more than the production of a superficial popular play or movie. It should be an opportunity to learn and understand much that is outside one's daily life. It should be a vehicle for emotional expression. With all the great plays to choose from there is a splendid opportunity. Your play can be a powerful intellectual stimulus and a real experience for the cast and the community.[1]

With the purpose of the play definitely decided and clearly kept in mind, it is time to consider the next step in choosing the play. From the point of view of the director, the selection depends on the answers to two questions, "Can I cast it"? - "Can I stage it"?

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1. Leslie Crump, op. cit., pp. 4-5.

Obviously, the answers to these questions entail consideration of many other points. First of all the teacher should not direct a play in which he is not interested. If a reading committee of students or faculty members is employed to aid in the selection of the play, it should be understood at the outset that they will not <u>force</u> a play on the director. The director should have the final word, because he knows the overall picture much better than anyone else, i.e., he knows his actors, his stage, his equipment, his crew members, and his audience. Having decided that he likes a play and wants to produce it, the director must answer the questions stated above. If he has been teaching dramatics in the particular school for some time, and knows the students fairly well, he can more readily decide whether or not he can cast the play. He will know whether the play suits the abilities, personalities and types of actors he has at hand. He will know whether the play under consideration meets the needs of these pupils. He will know whether the play provides a reasonable number of parts for those who wish to participate, and whether it provides equal opportunities for boys and girls. He will know whether the play will allow for growth in acting experience, or simply repeat that experience, and he will also know whether the play will provide a wholesome outlet for the emotions of the students. However, there is one hazard in knowing the students well;

the director is apt to believe that they can do more than they are really capable of doing. The wise teacher will avoid this attitude and will, at the same time, give the pupils dramatic material on which they can grow.

Casting may be called the process of fitting the parts to the people you have. In order to decide whether he can cast the play, the director must definitely answer the following questions: 1. Do the pupils have the ability to portray the characters in the play? 2. Are there enough pupils to cast according to types of characters? and 3. Does the play have too many or too few characters for the group of actors available?

The second question, of equal importance, which the director must answer, is, "Can he stage the play"? This means that he must calculate the size of the stage, the amount of available scenery, and the lighting equipment. Certainly, he will not be able to stage a play which calls for many actors and much elaborate scenery on a small stage. He may find that, while the acting area is sufficient, the wing space and depth of the stage do not allow for storage of scenery with which to make changes in scenes. Therefore, he may be limited to a play of one setting, - or perhaps not more than two. Likewise, if green rooms[1] are not available, the director may find that the backstage area is not sufficient for crowds waiting for their part in the performance. Having

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1. Infra, p. 213.

decided that the size of the stage meets the requirements of the play, the director must consider the necessary scenery. Is there any scenery at hand which may be used? Will an entirely new set of scenery have to be constructed? Are there available a sufficient number of boys and girls who are capable of designing and constructing the scenery needed? Will the designing and building of the scenery take a longer period of time than that necessary for rehearsals? If the director can answer these questions satisfactorily, he is ready to consider the question of lighting the play. Many school stages are not equipped with stage lights, or are poorly equipped. Then, there is the school stage which is well equipped, - but the teacher is not allowed to touch the switchboard! As will be seen in the chapter on "Lighting the Production,"[1] the effects of stage lighting may make or mar the play. Therefore, if the equipment is not sufficient, the teacher should not choose a play which would be ruined by ineffective lighting.

Although these factors are of vital importance, there are many others to be considered before the play is finally decided upon. The next point of consideration should be the audience.

> The audience must also be considered. . . . If they are not pleased, the players may have had some enjoyment, but their enjoyment will

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1. Infra, Chapter XIII.

> not be complete unless the audience shares in it too. This does not mean that we should be afraid of our audiences and never risk anything new or difficult. The public is a bad master. It is the duty of those who practice any of the arts to create public taste, to lead and direct it rather than to serve it.[1]

The director of school dramatics knows that the student or community audience primarily seeks enjoyment and entertainment. But he also knows that productions of plays can be a stimulating experience for the audience as well as the students. It is difficult to give an audience what it wants for an audience is not homogeneous. It may vary in ages, in temperaments, in cultural background, and in experiences. (Winifred Ward in her book, Theatre for Children, discusses the effect of various types of plays on the different age levels of childhood and adolescence.[2]) It is not sufficient to say, "Choose a play of wide appeal," but the teacher who reads widely and grows through experience will recognize those plays which appeal to audiences in general. It must be a clear-cut story with a good plot; it must touch the emotions, especially sympathy and often pity; and it must be understandable. It must please the audience from their point of view, tastes, and interests. The teacher who knows the student body and the community will not offend these personal opinions and ideals. He

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1. Purdom, op. cit., p. 21.

2. Winifred Ward, Theatre for Children, pp. 119-122. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1939.

will be especially careful of prejudices both moral and religious. Never, if possible, should the play shock the audience. If it will insult or hurt anyone because of race, religion, or social standing, it should not be used.

The director of school dramatics should be especially careful in choosing plays with love interest. The adolescent is rather shy of displaying his emotions in embracing or love-making, and the school theatre is not the place for it. This does not mean that there may not be a love element in the play; to the contrary, it is "love which makes the world go round" and the children thrill to deeds which are done because love prompts them. Yes, the play may have a love interest so long as it is kept on a high plane, and developed mostly through the dialogue of the players. This does not mean that a boy may not even touch a girl's hand, or put his arm about her shoulders! The teacher who will not permit these actions has no place as director in the school theatre, for dramatics should place the sexes on a basis of human relations which is true to life.

Continuing to consider the choice of a play from the viewpoint of the audience, the director will want variety. As Seely and Hackett say:

> . . . perhaps, . . . our school and community have been on a steady diet of contemporary comedies and farces for five years. Although there is certainly nothing wrong with either comedies or farces as such, even a good thing can be overdone. Not only are we presenting

> an unfair picture of life by thus restricting our productions, but we are also limiting our own development by ignoring the opportunities provided by other types of plays. Similarly, if our school has almost exclusively produced "costume" plays, mystery melodramas, or any other one type, we must take it upon ourselves to inject variety into the program.
>
> Our school theater should, furthermore, slight neither American nor foreign plays. We should strive for variety of locale and characterization. That is, all of our plays should not be about wealthy people in New York City, or poor people in the slums, or European nobility, or American high-school boys and girls.[1]

Repetition of the same type of play over a long period of time may eventually cause a drop in attendance. Such a drop might, in turn, have an unsatisfactory influence on the student actors. There is so wide a field from which to choose that it is absurd to bore the audience with monotony.

Variety is also necessary from the viewpoint of developing the student. Different types of plays not only give the actors a broader opportunity to develop, but they provide the crew members with variety in types of scenery, costumes, and lighting. So, for the benefit of both audience and students, the director should plan his yearly program to include variety. In so planning, it is well to know that the comedy is not always the easiest, but sometimes the most difficult type of play to produce.

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1. Howard Francis Seely and William Arthur Hackett, Experiences in Speaking, pp. 391-392. Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1940.

Purdom says:

> I place the different classes of plays in the following order of difficulty:
> Comedy, the hardest.
> Tragedy, almost as difficult.
> Romantic plays, much easier.
> Farce, easier still.
> Naturalistic plays, easiest of all.[1]

Variety also gives the director an opportunity to produce plays which will improve the dramatic taste of the audience and lead to cultural growth. However, the community cannot be educated in a day or even a year. It must be done by degrees. Therefore, the careful director will probably choose for the first production of the year a type of play which is well liked by the particular audience. Throughout the year better plays may be interspersed with the type most enjoyed by the audience. Thus, by a gradual process, the community audience may be led to appreciate the good and the beautiful in drama. Eugene Davis, Instructor in Dramatics at Glenville High School, Cleveland, says:

> At Glenville High School this is our settled policy. We try to select good plays. We realize, of course, that these plays must have entertainment value, that they must have audience appeal. However, this does not mean that we must invariably cater to a so-called popular demand and produce, year after year, without ever attempting to improve our standards, the cheapest, lightest, and most trivial plays. We are firmly convinced that in a vast majority of cases an audience does not want that kind of theatrical fare. From the very first, therefore, it has been our aim to build up gradually better audience taste, and the results have been extremely

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1. Purdom, op. cit., p. 25.

> gratifying. The experiment has aroused an interest in our productions, not only in the school but also throughout the entire community.[1]

Likewise, the play may have moral value, but it must teach its moral subtlely. Neither students nor audience will "take" direct preaching.

The selection of the play has thus far been considered from the angles of: 1. purpose, 2. casting, 3. staging, and 4. audience appeal. There are still other points to consider, mainly: 1. the budget, 2. the actors, 3. the time necessary for preparation, and 4. the royalty. The budget has already been mentioned, briefly. Consider the many items which may run up the cost of production: scenery, costumes, properties, lighting, make-up, scripts, royalty, programs, tickets, and publicity. Some plays might require expenditure in all of these items, - others in none. It depends upon conditions of place and time. Factors determining the cost may vary from school to school and within a school from time to time. It is an individual problem. Selecting the play never involves an exact duplication of problems. All these items have been included here in order that the director will not overlook any of them in approximating the cost of a production. The teacher who has become experienced in directing dramatics finds that the budget may be balanced by careful selection of the

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1. Eugene C. Davis, Amateur Theater Handbook, pp. 39-40. New York: Greenberg : Publisher, 1945.

years program. In other words one elaborate production which requires new scenery, costumes, etc. may be offset with a production using a simple setting of drapes, and modern costumes. Another play produced during the year may make use of scenery and costumes on hand. By gradually building up a stock of scenery and costumes which may be used again and again (by repainting, dyeing, and remaking) the strain on the budget is considerably reduced.

While the actor has not been our first consideration in choosing the play, he is, of course, a vital one.

> The real test of a play is its effect upon the players. If they grow to like it better and better as they work with it - to see new meaning, new humor, new beauty in each repetition, . . . the play is a good play, and is worth doing, both for its own sake and for its influence on the morale of the organization. But if after a half dozen rehearsals it seems to grow wearisome - if the sentiments begin to seem tawdry and the jokes stale - one may suspect that it is not really a good play; and even if it seems to entertain the audience the long-range result will be bad.[1]

> High school students should not memorize tawdry stuff, for what they act will become a part of their spiritual equipment through life and surely they should absorb only the best. . . . Of course, the subject matter must also be suitable for young people; sordidness, vulgarity, and ultra-sophistication have no place in school plays, . . .[2]

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1. Dolman, op. cit., p. 74.

2. Ommanney, op. cit., pp. 283-284.

> A play ofttimes becomes a lasting memory in the minds of those taking part, and therefore, all lines and situations should serve to cultivate the sympathies, to broaden the interests, and - except perhaps for the conversation of some of the character parts - to exemplify good, conversational English.[1]

> A good play always helps an actor because it gives him situations and characters that he can make convincing. In it there is always room for interesting study.[2]

These authors have very ably stated the possible effects of the play upon the young and impressive minds of adolescents. Their remarks point out to the director that the student-actors either suffer or gain by the choice of the play. If dramatics is to be used as a means of educational experiences, the play should be considered very carefully from the viewpoint of the actor.

Time is an important element in every school project. Therefore, in selecting the play, the director should consider the time necessary for rehearsals. Some plays can be prepared in three or four weeks, others require five or six weeks of preparation. Consequently, if a four week deadline is to be met, the teacher should not choose a play which requires six weeks for rehearsal. The rehearsal time and time required for constructing scenery and making costumes

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1. Alice Evelyn Craig, The Speech Arts, p. 475. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1944.

2. Sara M. Barber, Speech Education, p. 444. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1939.

should be well balanced. As will be seen in the chapter on "Rehearsing the Play,"[1] the scenery, costumes, and properties should be completely ready for the last week of rehearsals. Therefore, it would be ridiculous to choose a play which needed only three weeks for rehearsals but six weeks for production.

Royalties are an annoying and often misunderstood subject. Therefore, although they have been mentioned under the budget, the writer has chosen to discuss them in more detail. The royalty should be the first obligation of the director and school producing a play. A genuinely interested teacher of dramatics throws himself wholeheartedly into his work. He works hard, often depriving himself of rest and recreation. He does not regret this; he is happy in his work. But at the first of the month he wants his pay. So does the author and the publisher of the play. Every dramatics teacher should know the facts about royalties. The federal law is specific.

Royalties would not be half so high if all organizations and groups producing plays would pay. Half the royalty which the honest person pays goes for "catching" the fellow who did not pay. Seven hundred dollars is the approximate cost of publishing a thousand copies of a play. Twelve hundred dollars is the average total cost of establishing a published play. Yet the publish-

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1. Infra, Chapter VIII.

ers and playwrights are doing much to help the schools with non-royalty plays. Co-operation and understanding on the part of all concerned will build up a better feeling among playwrights, publishers, and directors; will eventually lower the cost of royalties; and may also stimulate the writing of more and better plays for high school students.

For further information, see Appendices pp. 217-220 for answers to questions on royalties.

Where should the director look for plays? The catalog of any play publishing house will reveal an overwhelming list of plays. These lists are accompanied by brief descriptions of the play. However, remembering that the selection of a play is an individual problem, the director should be wary of these descriptions. These catalogues list many fine plays and many bad plays. The choice is up to the discrimination of the director.

All the play publishing houses are reputable concerns. A list of such publishers is given in the Appendices, p. 247.

CHAPTER VI

PREPARING THE SCRIPT

A well directed play must show a careful preparation of the script. The director must study the play thoroughly and make several decisions before he can actually begin this preparation. A casual reading or skimming will not suffice. He must not base his idea on what someone else has said or done with the play; he must think the play through, make his own interpretation, and form his own ideas. The first step in analyzing is to decide what type of play it is, i.e. comedy, tragedy, farce, or melodrama. There are only four types[1], but it is not always easy to make this decision. For example, reading of the script does not always bring out the laughs as does the visualized portrayal upon the stage. Consequently plays are sometimes interpreted as tragedies when they should be comedies. The director should, therefore, visualize the play as he reads. Once the decision has been made as to type, he must treat the play accordingly throughout; it must not change from comedy to tragedy or vice versa.

The second step is to decide upon the theme of the play. In writing the play, the author is trying to "say" something. This is the theme. The director must discover what the theme is and prepare to make it clear to the audience. It is best to write the theme down and

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1. Infra, p. 216.

then summarize each act with one sentence.

The third step is to determine the treatment of the play. There are various styles of production such as realistic, stylistic, and formalized. When the director has decided upon this point, he has determined the angle of approach or the directoral attitude toward the script. He should never change this angle of approach or attempt to mix two treatments. If any change is made it must be in the entire treatment of the play.

The fourth step is to analyze the characters in the play. The director must understand each character as an individual person in real life. He must study the character through the words of the author, through the words spoken by the character, and through the words of other characters spoken about him. He must study the character by his actions, - what he does, and what he fails to do. Only by thorough analysis of each character can the director determine the interpretation of that character on the stage.

The fifth step is the cutting of the unnecessary parts of the play. Care should be taken not to cut any part which gives the theme. This is the vital part and all of it should remain. If cutting is necessary, the director should cut only to the story line, not beyond it. The story and action should remain. Soliloques and other unnecessary parts may be cut. Caution should be taken in substituting any lines as it is sometimes obvi-

ous that they are out of place.

The sixth step is to plan and diagram the action of the play. The director should not attempt to plan the action in his mind only. He should use a visual method as well. First a floor plan[1] of the stage and setting should be made. The elevation[2] of scenery and properties should be kept in mind. Entrances should not be blocked by furniture, and playing areas should not be blocked. The use of pins with large colored heads is one method of plotting the action. Chess men, buttons, or blocks of wood may also be used. These may represent the players and be moved from place to place on the floor plan as the director visualizes the movement on the stage. His final decision of the action should be diagramed on paper, either in the margin of the script or interleaved in the script. Directors use different markings and symbols for this purpose. The following are given as illustrations:

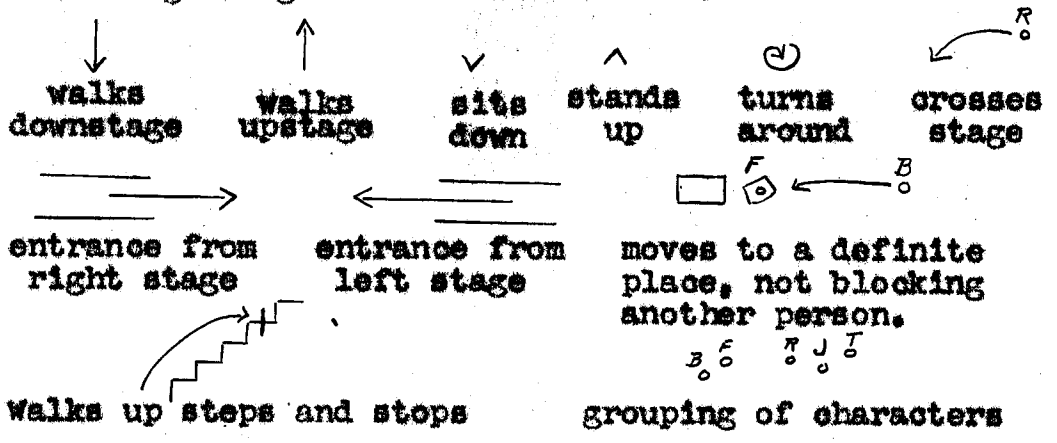

FIGURE 2. SYMBOLS USED IN MARKING THE DIRECTOR'S SCRIPT

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1. Infra, pp. 126, 213.

2. Infra, pp. 127, 213.

In addition to using the diagram, many directors describe the action in writing, to the side of the diagram. The exact word or syllable on which a move is made is indicated on the script. This may be done in several ways; a line may be drawn under the word on which the action takes place; an arrow may be drawn from the word to the symbol in the margin; or corresponding numbers may be used for the word and the symbol.

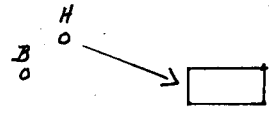
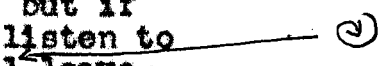
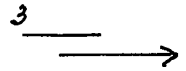
Script	Diagram	Description
Helen: I must use the telephone at once, please don't stop me.		Helen crosses quickly to the table.
Bill: You're making a mistake, but if you won't listen to reason I'll leave.		Bill turns to go.
Jean: What's going on here? Don't tell me you're quarreling again?		Jean enters unexpectedly from R.

FIGURE 4. CORRELATION OF WORD AND ACTION SHOWN ON THE SCRIPT

Warnings and cues for curtain, lights, and sound effects are also marked on the script. The script when completely marked is known as the prompt book.[1]

> This prompt book is the key to the whole production. It is a complete guidebook, the preparation of which is begun by the director and is completed by him and his assistants during the rehearsals of the play.
>
> Many different methods of marking a prompt book are in vogue.[2]

1. Infra, p. 215.

2. Davis, op. cit., p. 55.

> Differences in temperament make for different methods, and some directors are less methodical than others. The less experienced director will almost surely avoid a good deal of confusion, if he has a fairly detailed plan all down on paper before he plunges into actual work with the actors and technicians.[1]

Figure 2. (p. 46) illustrates how a page in the prompt book may be marked.[2]

The reader may question the use of the margins for making diagrams of movement and positions, marking warnings, cues, etc., since they are not usually wide enough for this purpose. Several methods may be used, but in any case, if the play is printed one or two copies should be unbound. The pages of the printed copy may be pasted onto larger sheets of heavy bond paper, thus leaving sufficient margins for all markings. These sheets may be held together in a loose leaf binder, or as Jeffreys and Stopford say:

> A note-book should be procured, robust and of good size, but not too large to be held comfortably in the hand; the quarto size, with stiff covers, is best. Into this note-book the printed pages are pasted, leaving a blank page opposite each page of print.[3]

Dolman says:

> If the play is in printed form and on small pages, the best way to prepare the prompt book is to cut up two copies and paste the pages in a strongly bound blankbook, large enough to provide wide margins, so that all

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1. Hewitt, op. cit., p. 335.

2. Supra, p. 46.

3. N.V.C. Jeffreys and R.W. Stopford, Play Production, p. 13. London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1936.

> corrections, stage directions, calls, and warnings can be clearly entered. If the play is typewritten, it will usually have plenty of margin space for this purpose. If it is rented and must be returned without disfiguration it may be interleaved with blank sheets clipped to the pages, and the notes entered on these.
>
> . . . My own practice is to enter all prompter's cues in red on the outside margin, all call-boy cues in blue at the tops of the pages, and all director's notes in pencil (to facilitate erasures and changes) on the inner and bottom margins.
>
> It is also good practice to paste into the spare pages of the prompt book carbon copies of the rehearsal schedule, the scene plot, light plot, property plot, and any other plot needed for the particular play; also any program notes, publicity releases, photographs, or other incidental material that might be useful, and would possibly otherwise be mislaid.[1]

There are other directors who prefer to keep the script in its original binding and paste additional margins on the right hand side of the pages. This method, however, does not allow for additional material, such as that mentioned by Dolamn, to be included.

Some directors keep such complete records in the prompt book that any question asked by actor, designer, or crew member may be answered from it. Other directors prefer to keep the scenery and costume designs, light plots, property plots, etc. separate and have the prompt book pertain only to the acting. The beginning director will find it a great asset to keep as much of the material together as possible. He will soon learn, If he

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1. Dolman, op. cit., pp. 83-84.

does not do so, that innumerable questions arise when he least expects them and does not have the material available to answer them. Therefore, the prompt book should remain, throughout the production, a complete and up-to-date record. Needless to say, it then becomes a complete history of the production and may be used as a reference whenever needed.

CHAPTER VII

CASTING THE PLAY

When the play has been chosen and the script prepared, it is time to cast the play. Proper casting, "fitting the parts to the players," is necessary for the ultimate success of the play, but it is a difficult task. There are various methods of casting: educational, tryouts, and understudy. Each of these methods have variations.

The Educational Method: This is an unconscious growth through work in the dramatics class. The class works in groups on scenes or on one act plays of literary and dramatic value. These groups may, if the teacher so desires, work on the same scenes and compare their interpretations, thus laying the basis for constructive group criticism. If the teacher wishes to carry the method still farther, she may allow the students to choose the best players from each group and have them react the scene together. By thus watching the latent talents develop, the teacher may choose those who are best suited for the parts in the play which is to be produced. Although this method is excellent in that it gives the teacher a much sounder basis of judgment, it is time consuming. Therefore, for the director who must cast his play quickly another method must be used.

The Tryout Method: This method gives every student who wishes to participate an equal chance to show his

acting ability, and his suitability for the play under consideration. Dolman calls the method:

> . . . a series of independent tests that will make possible the tentative choice of a cast, or at least the elimination of impossible candidates.[1]

While the tryout method provides a much quicker way of selecting the cast, it should not be too hurried. "A good play may be doomed to failure before rehearsals even begin if the casting is done hurriedly or inexpertly."[2] Since this method has many variations, it will be discussed at length later in this chapter.[3]

The Understudy Method: This method provides students the opportunity of studying the actual part in the play to be assigned. It is believed by many directors, however, that this method has a disadvantage in that the student knows the part too well and overacts.

A Combination of Methods: It is generally agreed that a combination of the above methods is ideal. However it takes much time and can be used only in small groups.

Responsibility of Selecting the Cast: There is some difference of opinion on the question of "Who should select the cast"? But it is usually agreed that the director should have the final decision. Some school administrators insist upon the use of a faculty

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1. Dolman, op. cit., p. 158.

2. Seely and Hackett, op. cit., p. 409.

3. Infra, pp. 76-89

committee, and in some instances, where friction is at a minimum, such a committee can be helpful. Hedde and Brigance say: "A committee eliminates cause for jealousy and diverse criticism, but the decision of the director should be final."[1] Frequently, a discussion with others helps the director to clarify qualifications of people he does not know. Also, a man may see some things which a woman does not see, and a woman may notice some things that a man does not notice. This point would advocate a mixed committee wherever one is used. It should be understood, of course, that the committee is familiar with the play, having read it before the tryout. The committee should discuss the candidates after the tryout, and when rating cards have been used, they should be turned over to the director immediately following this discussion. Figure 5, which follows, is an example of a possible rating card:

A RATING CARD FOR STUDENT TRYOUTS

Qualities Considered	Rating
Voice	50 points
1. Tone	10 points
2. Range	10 points
3. Carrying quality	20 points
4. Enunciation	10 points
Interpretation	20 points
Type (for part)	20 points
Adaptability	10 points

FIGURE 5. A RATING CARD FOR STUDENT TRYOUTS

1. Hedde and Brigance, op. cit., p. 511.

> The chart, although very difficult to follow, at least gives the judges some scale by which to rate the contestants.
>
> It is well also to have a typewritten characterization of each person in the play for the particular benefit of the busy judges, many of whom have not had time to become familiar with the text.[1]

Many educators strongly oppose the use of a committee. Merrill and Fleming say:

> The try-out system, with other teachers and pupils as judges, is a great educational mistake. Only the person who thoroughly knows the children, their needs, their weaknesses, and their latent capacities can make a wise selection. The outwardly clever pupils, who favorably impress the listener unskilled in the pedagogy of dramatic acting, are often those who should not be chosen for a leading part. We need to remind ourselves frequently that the primary purpose of drama in the school is education and not entertainment. The judicious selection of the players is therefore of greatest importance.[2]

Davis also argues against the use of a casting committee. He says:

> As a rule in the average amateur group, the members of a casting committee do not have the training, the experience, or the time to analyze the play in any such searching manner. Moreover, you are the one person in your organization who, in the long run, will be held accountable for the outcome of the production. It seems only fair and logical, therefore, that you, and you alone, should be responsible for the casting.[3]

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1. Eleanor Lane Peabody, Producing Your Play, pp. 8-9. Boston: Walter H. Baker Company, 1935.

2. Merrill and Fleming, op. cit., p. 107.

3. Davis, op. cit., p. 73.

Katharine Ommanney also says: "The director alone can determine which of those who have tried out will best carry out his idea of the play.[1] Many other authors could be quoted who advocate this belief.

Students should occasionally have the experience of casting the members of their group in a play, but not when that play is to be given for a public audience. In the dramatics class this is good experience for them, the outcome of which may be very valuable. Some directors allow the students to voice their oppinions before the tryout, but it is understood that their suggestions are not a final decision. Merrill and Fleming say:

> The members of the class may always be asked what part each would like best to play, and the writer frequently has invited his students to make out a list showing what they think would be the best casting of the characters. While this information doubtless aids somewhat in the selection, the final decision must be left to the choice of the teacher.[1]

Tryout Procedure: Everyone should be given a fair chance to tryout. Announcement of the dates on which tryouts will be held should be made well in advance, and it should be made certain that all receive the announcement. The tryouts may be either general or time allotted. If it is a general tryout, all the candidates come at one time. Some directors allow the pupils to sit in the auditorium and listen to others who are try-

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1. Ommanney, op. cit., p. 287.

2. Merrill and Fleming, op. cit., p. 107.

ing out. Other directors allow only one candidate at a time, or at the most two or three. In this case, the candidates cue up outside the door and are called by the call-boy or prompter, to whom the director has delegated this task. Each method has its disadvantage. In the first instance, the would-be actors, in listening to the other candidates, may be unjustly critical, and after the casting is completed, complain of unfair selection. This, of course, is possible because the student does not have the overall picture in mind as the director does. However, this is apt to happen only when the try-out is used as a quick method of casting. When dramatic classes have studied the art of dramatics as a whole, they understand the impartial basis on which a cast is selected and trust the decisions of the director. The cueing up process has its disadvantage in that the candidates may become tired, if the line is long, and leave. Those who stay may become restless and noisy.

Experienced directors usually say that only those people who have some reason for being present should be allowed in the room. This being true, the time allotment method is the most satisfactory. The director using this method prepares in advance, or has a student prepare a time chart. This chart is posted in an accessible place, and students sign up for the time they will try-out. In this way, the director may control the number of students and the time element. He may set the periods

ten or fifteen minutes apart, or even longer if his try-out method is an elaborate one. Some directors try only one person at a time; others try a group of three or four persons. The time chart should be arranged according to the preference of the director.

In addition to the time chart there are other preparations to be made before the tryout takes place. These, of course, depend upon the method used. Supposing that dramatics has taken its rightful place in the curriculum of the school, records of each individual tryout should be kept. By filing these records, the dramatics teacher has on hand a nucleus of information which will help in casting the pupils in assembly programs and class plays as well as in the plays which are produced for the community audience. Cards or sheets must be printed or mimeographed for this purpose. Needless to say, these records may take various forms of make up and be either limited or elaborate. Dolman says:

> The results of all tryouts should be reflected in filed entries, both for candidates who have been awarded parts, and for those who have been rejected as unsuitable for certain parts but who might be very useful in parts of a different kind. In addition, periodic or seasonal auditions may be held, without reference to any particular play, but solely for the purpose of building up the talent pool.
>
> A good casting list is extremely helpful when plays are being considered for production, and often the principal parts of a play under consideration can be tentatively cast from

the list without recourse to special tryouts.

> Each entry in the list should include the player's sex, height, weight, complexion, date of birth . . . The entry should list the parts played, with dates, together with any director's comments on the player's special abilities and limitations, including his mannerisms, peculiarities of voice, movement, and temperament, his possession or lack of a comedy sense, and the like. It might well include also his measurements, hat and wig sizes, and so on. Most important of all, it should include his record for attendance at rehearsals, ability to take direction, quickness and accuracy in learning lines, and general reliability. Naturally, the list should be kept under lock and key, and made available only to directors and casting committees.[1]

This description includes many points which some directors would not deem necessary. Figure 6. (p. 80) gives an illustration of an information card used for casting lists. The student may be given this information blank as he enters the auditorium, or beforehand.

> The candidate can fill in his part of it, and hand the card to the director. During the tryout the director can fill out the rest, and the card can then go into a file for consultation whenever needed.[2]

When a faculty committee assists in the casting, a rating card is sometimes used.[3] This may aid the director especially in cases where the decision is difficult.

In addition to such cards or sheets which go into a permanent file, some preparation must be made for ma-

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1. Dolman, op. cit., p. 164

2. Hewitt, op. cit., p. 336.

3. Supra, p. 74.

Dramatic Index

Name _____ Home Room _____

Address _____ English Unit ___

Telephone _____ Height _____ Weight _____

Coloring: Hair _____ Eyes _____ Skin _____

Check below, the activities you are interested in:

Acting _____	Singing _____	Dancing _____
Designing _____	Scenery _____	Properties ____
Costumes _____	Make-up _____	Lighting _____
Business _____	Publicity _____	House _____

(reverse side)

Have you taken part in other plays? _____

Name the parts you played _____

Have you had any special training? _____

Do you play a musical instrument? _____

Do you work in the afternoon? _____

Do not write below this double line.

Voice _____	Adaptability _____
Diction _____	Personality _____
Reading _____	Physical Appearance _____
Interpretation _____	Types suited for: _____
Movement _____	_____
Pantomime _____	General Estimate: _____
Stage Presence _____	_____

FIGURE 6. TRYOUT CARDS USED FOR CASTING LISTS

terial to be read or memorized by students for the try-out. If the librarian is co-operative, it is an excellent plan to have a shelf set aside for such material. Depending on the director, it may take various forms. Some directors use tryout manuals. These may be bought or made up in mimeograph form by the director. They include: dialogues from plays, including tragedy, comedy, etc.; suggested pantomimes; lines from poems; publicity lines; directions to be followed; and sometimes speeches from the play to be produced. Other directors use marked copies of plays. Selected dialogues from plays may be made for groups of two, three, or four people, depending upon the number allowed at the tryout. Sometimes only the lists of plays with suggested page numbers are given. Then again the list may be only of suggested plays, and the students allowed to choose their dialogues at random. Some directors prefer, however, to have students use parts from the play which is to be produced. In this case, copies of the entire play, or selections from the play, are made available. Regardless of the reading matter to be used, if the director wishes the students to be prepared for tryouts, he must make this material available or give instructions to the students for obtaining and selecting material.

It will be noticed that thus far the place for the tryout has been designated as "the auditorium." Tryouts and rehearsals should, if possible, always be held where-

ever the final performance is to be given. This gives the candidates the "correct feeling" from the beginning, and it also enables the director to judge better the stage appearance and voice qualities of those who perform.

Variations or combinations of methods may be used in the actual tryout. A number of methods follow, any of which may be combined with others.

A Reading Tryout: In a reading tryout, the candidate either comes prepared with material to read, or he is given material after he arrives. This method is limited in that many students are poor readers. The experienced dramatics teacher knows that a poor reader may be a good actor, but he is greatly handicapped with the reading of lines and a book or paper in his hand. On the other hand, a good reader may be a poor actor. However, a reading tryout does have some advantages. The director may check enunciation, articulation, pronunciation, and voice qualities. It is obvious that the poor reader will give a better demonstration of what he can do, if he has been allowed to study the reading material before coming to the tryout. Some directors give the candidates the material on arrival, and allow them a brief time to read it silently before going onto the stage to tryout. It is very doubtful that this is enough time for the student to become familiar with the material. Davis says:

> Do not hurry these tryouts. Give ample time to each competitor to read the play and to study the passages which have been selected. No actor can express what he does not understand. He cannot give out what he has not taken in. He cannot interpret a passage unless he knows all the circumstances under which it is supposed to be spoken. This is one of the basic principles of acting.
>
> You may feel, perhaps, that such methodical procedure is a waste of time. I assure you it is not. A tryout should not be merely a superficial reading of unfamiliar lines. It should be a genuine test of the competitor's latent ability to visualize and to create a specific role. Moreover, it should be a test which will give you as the director an opportunity to select a well-balanced cast, every member of which fits into the picture as a whole and plays the part for which he, above all others in the group, is best qualified.[1]

The reader will notice that Davis uses passages from the play which is to be produced for tryouts. Some directors prefer that the candidates use scenes of other plays. Dolman says:

> For the reading test the candidates may be asked to read at sight from several different scenes, taken perhaps from another play . . . of the same author . . . The material may be varied for different candidates according to their apparent possibilities, but the attention should be upon speech habits rather than character interpretation.[2]

Most directors prefer to have the students read the lines of at least two characters even if they are using the play to be produced. If students are allowed to "try for certain parts" the director will find that too

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1. Davis, op. cit., p. 75.

2. Dolman, op. cit., p. 159.

many try for the same parts, and they will overact. It is the writer's opinion that the teamwork and orchestration of the cast as a whole should be kept uppermost in mind throughout the process of tryouts and only (if at all) in the final tryouts with a very few people should there be any consciousness of trying for a "certain" part.

Crump gives still another variation of the reading tryout. He says:

> It is a good plan not to have the candidates read the parts they are trying for, but to start at random in the play and have each one read the lines as they come to him, in turn. With a little judicious planning it is possible to take a passage that will give each one a few lines of the part for which you are really testing him without his suspecting the fact. Much that would have been affected in his reading will be effaced and the true placement of voice and pitch will be heard.[1]

As has already been mentioned under Tryout Procedure[2], the candidates may read alone or in a group. The group tryout has the advantage of allowing the director to see each candidate in relation to others.

An experienced teacher-director can tell much from a reading tryout, but it should not be the final analysis. Too many directors are prone to use this method only and stop. Other methods should be used separately or combined with the reading tryout.

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1. Crump, op. cit., p. 14.

2. Supra, pp. 76-82

A Conversation Tryout: This type of tryout may be used as a check on grammar and cultivated speech. It may readily be combined with the reading tryout by the director's asking the candidate questions immediately after he has read, and engaging him in conversation. In this way it may be discovered whether the candidate reverts to poor speech habits and colloquialisms in his conversational speech. The reader may ask why this is necessary if lines are to be memorized. There are two reasons for this: 1. During tense scenes, or in any excitement which might occur during a final performance, the actor may revert to his habitual type of speech even though the words are memorized. 2. In his effort to speak correctly, the actor may exaggerate a cultivated type of speech. The personal interview[1], of course, includes the conversational tryout.

An Impromptu Tryout: In this tryout, the director looks for more general qualities. A list of characters, with some description of each character, may be given to the candidates after they arrive for the tryout. Each may choose from the list a character that he would like to portray. The director may then give verbal instructions (or the instructions may have been included with the list of characters) as to what the actor is to include in his characterization. For example: Imagine you are an embarrassed young man. You are walking down

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1. Infra, p. 88.

the street with a young lady whom you like very much. Another young lady, who is a friend, passes you. She is in a teasing mood; she flirts, drops her handkerchief, etc. You pick up the handkerchief, run after her, return it, and then go back to the young lady you like. She is angry. You try to explain. She will not listen and leaves you. You go after the young lady who caused the trouble and beg her to explain to the first lady. She laughs at you. Another couple pass; you introduce them. The second young lady goes off with this couple. Discouraged, you go home, pull off your collar and tie, and sit down to read a book. The telephone rings. It is your favorite young lady calling to apologize. By watching such impromptu characterizations, the director may get a better idea of the intelligence, emotional capacity, bodily movements, speech habits, and voice of the actor. This method may also be used singly or with small groups of candidates.

The Pantomime Tryout: Pantomime is included in the impromptu method, but it may be used separately without any spoken word. The primary purpose of this tryout is to check the bodily expressiveness of the candidate. Ease and grace of movement should be kept uppermost in mind.

> If people cannot get about the stage easily or are frightened stiff and stand in one place, they are the most hopeless candidates of all. The people who will serve you best are those who are free in their arms and legs,

backs and necks, heads, and facial muscles.[1] The student may be asked to carry out pantomimes which include walking, sitting, and standing in various manners. Thus, the general stage appearance may also be observed. It is true that the body often expresses what words cannot express. Therefore this method is important to any tryout. Sometime during the tryout procedure, the candidate should be given a direction to follow. During the pantomime tryout is an excellent time. For example, the student is told to pick some magazines from the floor and to place a vase of flowers in the center of a table. Some directors purposely arrange the stage so that there will be some obstacles (a piece of furniture, - scenery, - etc.) in the way of the candidate during a tryout. The student who can move about these obstacles with some grace of movement, and who can follow directions intelligently will be found a great asset during rehearsals as well as to the final performance.

A Memorized Tryout: Candidates for tryout may be asked to memorize scenes, but usually the majority will show up with papers or books from which they read. Those who are prepared to act a scene without reading it have generally memorized it for some previous performance. Therefore, they have had practice and instruction which

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1. Andrew Thomas Weaver, Gladys Louise Borchers and Charles Henry Woolbert, The New Better Speech, p. 483. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1937.

puts the other candidates to an unfair disadvantage. For these reasons, this type of tryout is not usually successful.

The Personal Interview: The director who has the same students who are to produce the play in a dramatics class has many advantages. One of these is the personal interview. As a part of his teaching, he will probably have had a personal interview with each student before the time for tryouts arrives. Dolman says:

> . . . a personal interview, is in many respects the most valuable of all, and yet one that many directors omit altogether. It will not, of course, serve by itself, for one wants to know how the candidate will look and act on the platform, viewed objectively; but on the other hand it will reveal quickly many things that do not appear at all in the platform tests until weeks after rehearsal.[1]

The director who is not hurried in the procedure of casting the play may include the personal interview with the other methods of tryouts. The student may be asked to sit down with the teacher either before or after going onto the stage for a tryout, and the teacher may engage him in conversation. Needless to say the dramatics director should be a teacher who can do this tactfully and with a great deal of understanding.

Any of the types of tryouts: reading, impromptu, conversational, pantomime, or memorized may be combined. The director may plan for a succession of these methods within a given period of ten, fifteen, or twenty minutes.

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1. Dolman, op. cit., p. 162.

Such a combination depends upon the director. He alone knows the needs of the students in the particular group with which he is working. If the group is not familiar to him, then it is better to use as many methods as possible.

Regardless of the type of tryout used, there are definite principles and questions which must be kept in mind when casting a play. The following list is suggestive:

1. The physical make up: height, weight, posture, and coloring, should fit the part of the character. There should also, as a rule, be a contrast between the physical make up of people who are on the stage together in many scenes.

2. The voice[1]: volume, pitch, variety, and quality should be carefully considered. Contrast in voices of people who play together is important as it helps the audience to determine quickly which player is speaking. People who have the same voice levels, therefore, should not play together. Monotones, of course, should be cast in minor parts until they have widened their speaking range through work in the dramatics or speech class. The range of tone should be enough but not too much. The director should look for shading in the reading of the lines. Students who read the wrong meaning into lines, will probably act the play in the same way.

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1. Infra, pp. 236-246.

Poor voice qualities such as nasal, haspered, tight throat, and tight jaw should be checked for corrective work in the dramatics and/or speech class. People with such voice qualities are, of course, not ready for leading parts in a formal production.

3. Interpretation[1]: Inner feeling, voice, and bodily movement should flow into one united whole. In casting, the director should remember that he wants what the person can bring into the part as well as the part of the character as written. The interpretation either makes sense or it does not make sense. The gestures should spring spontaneously from the lines; they should not have to be thought out.

4. Defects: Idiosyncrasies should be checked in the tryouts. Barring the teen-age fads, the director should beware of strange head dresses, peculiar clothes, etc. In a play of modern dress, these oddities may appear in a final performance if they are worn to tryouts. Idiosyncrasies in speech should also be checked.

5. Leaditis: Students who want only leading parts cause much trouble throughout the entire process of production. They are not ready for acting, and should have the socializing experiences of the dramatics class.

> He has not the spirit of sportmanship, the esprit de corps that is absolutely necessary for a successful play.[2]

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1. Infra, p. 114.

2. Josephine Turner Allin, The Amateur Actor's Manual, p. 26. Chicago: The Dramatic Publishing Company, 1916.

In general, the director should keep these qualities uppermost in mind: intelligence, imagination, attitude, temperament, technique, powers of observation, emotional capacity, good voice, ability to use the body, and willingness to learn. The following list of questions, which Davis discusses briefly in his book, may be helpful:

1. Does he fit the part physically?
2. Does he fit the part vocally?
3. Is he able to visualize and to create on the stage the character for which he is trying out?
4. Does he have a good memory?
5. Has he had any previous acting experience?
6. What is his record for attendance and promptness at rehearsals?
7. Does he co-operate with the other members of the cast?
8. Does he welcome criticism or resent it?
9. Is he willing to play any part for which he may be cast by the director?[1]

There are several other points to be considered under casting. One of these is <u>type</u> casting. A "natural" is a person who fits perfectly and exactly into a part. However, this does not mean that a student is limited to one particular type of character.

> Every actor is naturally limited to a greater or lesser degree by his physique and by his personality, but this does not ordinarily preclude his playing a considerable variety of roles. The actor whose short stature fits him to play boys may also be able to play old men; the comic actor may be capable of serious roles. Thus, casting should be designed, not only gradually to break in the complete tyro, but also to widen the repertoire of the relatively experienced actor.[2]

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1. Davis, <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 76-82.

2. Hewitt, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 335.

> . . . be careful that members do not become identified with particular types and are always chosen for the one type. This may be good for the play but does not allow the individual a chance for growth. Do not, however, put a member into a part for which he is obviously unfitted just to give him a chance to try something new. In groups where the same audience sees the same actors again and again the continual casting of the same players in similar parts is monotonous and unfair to both audience and actor.[1]

It is better for the director to try to attain a middle ground in type casting. After preparing the script[2], the director should have in mind a definite mental picture of each character in the play.

> Of course, we may not be able to find the ideal persons to fit our mental-picture cast, but unless we begin with very definite characteristics in mind, we shall probably end up with an unsatisfactory group of actors for our play.[3]

> In the casting it is better for the director to combine inherent acting abilities and type tendencies. If a vivid, animated short type is needed, or if a haughty tall type is needed, it is best to look for those types. In this way the director will choose the students whose physical appearances and voices most nearly approximate the characters to be portrayed. Thus the director accepts nature as an aid, and he will begin his training where nature left off.[4]

"Natural comedians" do not usually "go over" when cast to type. They usually do not fit the part at all.

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1. Crump, op. cit., p. 15.

2. Supra, Chapter VI.

3. Hedde and Brigance, op. cit., p. 512.

4. Seely and Hackett, op. cit., p. 409.

Therefore, the director should be wary of people who are called "cases" or "cards" by their peers. On the stage, they are never so funny as people imagine they are in life. It is better to depend on the lines of the play and the directions given for the comedy than to hope that the natural comedian will make the part extremely funny. The director should also be careful in selecting a person for a comedy part if he wishes to cast the same person in a contrasting role soon after. For example, if a person has just been very successful in a comedian's part and then plays the part of a tragedian, the audience will remember him as funny and laugh at his most serious lines.

The less training the group has had, the more type casting is necessary. As the director works with the group and they become more flexible, they may be given more opportunities of portraying different types of characters.

Another point of consideration in casting is the <u>double cast</u>. Many directors term this system as evil. With its use, they say that the play must suffer somewhere and lacks finish. They feel that directing the double cast involves too much time and saps the energy of the director with which he might otherwise direct a successful production. They also feel that the double cast arouses petty rivalry and jealousy. Above all, those directors who oppose the method are against the

unfairness which might result. First, unless each cast is allowed to act an equal number of times under the same circumstances, unfair discriminations may be made. Second, unpleasant and unfair comparisons of the two casts may be made by students and others in the audience. If the double cast system is used and only one performance is to be given, some players frequently feel that they are working for nothing, and they become discouraged and stop.

> If the players are inclined to be half-hearted it is not likely that they will relish the prospect of working hard up to the final rehearsal and then being obliged to retire in favor of somebody else, although an earnest group with a good director may be willing to take the chance for the sake of the experience and instruction.[1]

The purposes of double casting must be considered and each director must decide for himself whether the benefits out-weigh the evils in his own situation. The purpose may be three-fold. First, a double cast may be chosen in order that the director may postpone the final decision of casting the players. In this way the two best candidates for each part in the play may be given time and training to achieve their fullest development and portrayal of the part. Second, the double cast is chosen as a safe guard against sickness or accident. Especially in school dramatics is it true that an actor often cannot appear for a final performance

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1. Dolman, op. cit., p. 163.

for these reasons. Therefore, if two people are prepared for each part, the show can go on. Third, the double cast gives as many members as possible an opportunity to act.

The proponents of the system say that it provides valuable competition and instruction for the students. They believe that the actors are more alert, that they pay better attention, and strive to learn from each other. "Two casts give the children an opportunity to see at rehearsals the needs as well as the excellences in the work of those doing the same part that they are to portray."[1] They also feel that there is better cooperation. Since the players do not feel indispensable, they are willing to accept criticism and work with others.

Handled correctly, a double-cast play may be a stimulating experience for both students and teacher, but it entails some delicate situations and therefore should not be undertaken without careful forethought. The director must remember that it takes almost double the time in directing and that absolute fairness must be shown in the number of performances for each cast.

The use of understudies is a modified form of double casting. Understudies are usually cast for the leading roles. Often, students who are anxious to receive all the experience they can, are anxious to take

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1. Merrill and Fleming, op. cit., p. 106.

understudy parts. This opportunity provides them with experiences in listening to the other performers and in hearing the director's criticisms and suggestions. Such experiences can be invaluable to a person who is anxious to learn. It is usually best to give the understudy parts to people who have a minor role, since they will be on hand for most of the rehearsals anyway. They should be given the opportunity to act as often as possible so that they will be better prepared to take over in case of an emergency. Casts should always be announced or posted as tentative. They should remain so up to the final performance. Thus, if a player proves unsatisfactory, uncc-operative, or temperamental, he may immediately be replaced by the understudy.

Still another point to consider is teamwork. It has been emphasized elsewhere in this paper[1] that dramatics offers a wide field of experiences which must be integrated into a unified whole. Thus, the team is as important as the individual.

> . . . dramatists do not . . . write parts, they write plays; and audiences come to see plays. Good acting does not consist in playing parts; it consists in playing plays. It is not individual work, but group work. The individual part is the elementary part of acting, and within the limits of talent it is the easy part. It is the teamwork that is hard, and rare, and that must be learned even by those who have the talent. Above all it is the teamwork that counts most in accomplishing the purpose of the play. To miscast the parts and to ignore the pleasure of the

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1. Supra, pp. 8-11, 22.

> audience is to put a discount on teamwork right from the start, and it is therefore the worst possible way of training actors.[1]

> It is better to choose those who show the most intelligent sense of co-operation with the director and the other actors. As a matter of fact this type of actor frequently gives the better performance in the end, even considered as an individual, though his superiority is not so noticeable in the early rehearsals.[2]

If the director has taught his group long enough to work up the right esprit de corps, the students will hold the success of the play uppermost, and they will be ready to exchange or surrender parts if it is discovered that they have been miscast. Throughout the casting procedure, the teacher should make "teamwork" a large determining factor. The group of players may well be compared to an orchestra. If one player is out of tune, the whole play becomes discordant. Therefore, students should not be cast for formal plays until they have studied in the dramatics class long enough to learn that they must work with other players and for other players.

> Just as true is it, as it is of any athletic game, that everybody in the play must pull with the team, consider the team before himself if he would have it run smoothly.[3]

Therefore, in casting the play, the director should choose those people who show an interest and willingness to work. The student who can be depended upon often

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1. Dolman, op. cit., p. 177.

2. Ibid., p. 150.

3. Allin, op. cit., p. 26.

gives a better performance because he has studied his part, - put time and effort on it, and has been prompt at all rehearsals. Intelligence and co-operation will, in the end, mean fine, unified performances.

> In every club there are serious students eager and willing to take any and every role that will in any way add to their knowledge and skill . . . Usually hard workers, they are useful to a director in inspiring a working spirit in the other players and they should be cast where possible.[1]

The casting of minor parts ties in closely with the consideration of team work. The minor parts are as important for the final unification as the leading parts. Therefore, the student who feels that he should have been cast in a larger part has not caught the "spirit of the players" and is not ready to be cast at all. The more experienced actors should often be cast for minor parts. These people, by doing the small part well, and with dignity, do much to influence the youngsters who are experiencing dramatics for the first time. They may put such spirit and painstaking care into their parts that others cannot help but catch their spirit.

> Many a little theatre in this country and elsewhere has framed upon its green-room wall the memorable words of Stanislavsky: 'There are no small parts; only small actors.'[2]

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1. Crump, op. cit., p. 16.

2. Dolman, op. cit., p. 152.

CHAPTER VIII

REHEARSING THE PLAY

"Rehearsals should begin as soon as the cast is completed, and when well conducted, they are stimulating, creative experiences, to be enjoyed with the keenest delight."[1] In school dramatics, the teacher will not work with trained actors. He may find talent but not skill. It is his job to guide, direct, and train the actors. This is a process which must be carefully planned and executed. It is a learning process. Just as the conductor of an orchestra directs his musicians, so must the director guide his players. The conductor cannot wave his baton a few times and have a perfect orchestration; neither can the director sprinkle a few theories about and have a perfect performance. Practice is needed. Rehearsals provide the means of group practice. They are essential to unification of thought and interpretation. "Rehearsing a play can afford a creative satisfaction found in few activities, if the director, cast, and stage crew work together harmoniously and effectively to make the play grow into an artistic unit."[2]

A systematic plan should be made for rehearsals, for they are not just a series of periods set aside for going over the lines of a play. There are many other elements involved which require different types of rehearsals.

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1. Ommanney, op. cit., p. 267.

2. Ibid., p. 288.

Such rehearsals should follow a definite sequence, and, therefore, are carefully planned and scheduled by the director. The sequence of rehearsals should be as follows: 1. reading rehearsals; 2. blocking out rehearsals; 3. line rehearsals; 4. business rehearsals; 5. characterization and interpretation rehearsals; 6. scene rehearsals; 7. continuity rehearsals; 8. technical rehearsals; and 9. dress rehearsals. Each of these will be clarified in this chapter. The number of rehearsals will depend, of course, upon the play, - the length of the play and the number of characters involved. The schedule of rehearsals should not only be posted, but a mimeographed copy should be attached to every players script. The average rehearsal period for a three act play is five or six weeks. Some three act plays may be prepared in four weeks, others may require eight weeks for rehearsals. The time should never run beyond eight weeks and seldom beyond six, for the play will go dead if the actors do not have the stimulating experience of feeling that they have accomplished something at each rehearsal. Unless the play is a very difficult one, boredom is apt to creep in and the players lose interest if rehearsals are prolonged after six weeks. They are anxious to go into the performance, - to fulfill their accomplishments. The one act play is usually rehearsed for three or four weeks depending on the elements mentioned above. Another consideration is the background and training of

the students. If they have participated in dramatics classes during three years of junior or senior high school, they will not require so long a time for rehearsals as beginners. Each rehearsal must also be timed. If the rehearsal is held during the school day, there is usually no question as to the length of the period. It conforms to the schedule used in the particular school, - usually forty-five, fifty, or sixty minutes. Afternoon or Saturday morning rehearsals, however, must be brought to a close at a definite time. The students may beg to remain, but the director must consider not only the length of the child's day, but his parent's concern. (The janitor must be considered, too, and it is a wise teacher-director who keeps the good will of the janitor!) Beginning rehearsals may be shorter in length than later rehearsals. The director may start with forty-five minute periods and gradually increase them to sixty or ninety minutes. Three hours is the absolute maximum even with more mature students, for after they become tired more harm than good is done. They are apt to repeat and learn their mistakes rather than correct them. Rehearsals should be frequent. The director will have at least one group in rehearsal each day, and the entire cast should rehearse every school day for the last two weeks.

As much of the rehearsing as possible should be done on the stage, except, perhaps, the first reading

rehearsal.

> From the time that the parts are memorized, a stage, equipped as fully as possible with setting and properties, should be used. How can the performers gauge their final actions when rehearsing in a room that is not of the same size or proportions as the stage where the play is to be presented?[1]

The Reading Rehearsal. The purpose of the first rehearsal is to acquaint the player and the production staff with the play. It is called a reading rehearsal because the play is read either by the director or the actors. Some directors read the play to the group. This gives the actors the director's interpretation of it and his idea of the characterizations. These directors believe this gives the players a better understanding of the play and also helps each actor to see more clearly his relation to other characters in the play.

For a clearer understanding of the types of reading rehearsals it must be mentioned, here, that the actors may be given their "parts" in one of two ways. They may receive a copy of the entire script, or they may receive "sides".[2] The script, of course, is the entire play as written by the author. "Sides" are typed booklets which are prepared from the script. They are usually made on half sheets of paper to facilitate easy handling by the actors. All of the lines are not included, - only the lines of the particular character concerned. Thus, each

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1. Merrill and Fleming, op. cit., p. 111.

2. Infra, p. 215.

actor receives only his own lines and cues. The cues generally consist of the four words which precede his speech. The name of the preceding character is not given.

It is easily understood that when the actors are using sides, it is preferable for the director to read the play to them at the first rehearsal. It will save time and give them a better understanding as stated above.

Some directors believe that reading the play to the cast sets the pattern too definitely, - that they will copy his interpretations and not bring what they can of their own interpretation into the parts. These directors have the cast sit around a table and read their own parts in turn. In this type of reading rehearsal, the actors interpret their own part from the beginning. But it must be remembered that the director has studied the play; therefore, he understands the characters and must help the players to understand and interpret them correctly.

> At best, the understanding of the characters by the players is somewhat superficial, and it is the teacher's business to see that this is deepened now. The players' reading will show her instantly wherein they fail to grasp their parts, and she should stop the reading again and again to help them to understand.[1]

> Each child is encouraged to think out the interpretation of his own character, that it may come from within rather than be imposed by the director. Children who have had exper-

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1. Ward, Creative Dramatics, p. 162.

> ience in creative dramatics will be quite capable of discovering for themselves just what their characters are like, for they are accustomed to the study and interpretation of various types of people. Others may need guidance in finding out the author's idea about the character, and the director will need to call their attention to what the author says about them, what the other characters say to them or about them, what they themselves say and do.
>
> At this reading rehearsal the players will get a better idea of the play as a whole . . . Each one will begin to feel the reactions of his character to the rest of the cast, to understand the place his own character fills in the whole plot, to feel the story beginning to come alive.[1]

The reading of a three act play may not be completed in one rehearsal, especially if much time is used for discussions. Some directors insist upon the play being read straight through and then follow the reading with a discussion period. In any case, if the reading is not completed, the pupils will very likely finish reading it before the next rehearsal. This will be an advantage rather than a disadvantage as the reading at the next rehearsal will be smoother, and the students will have a better understanding as they read.

Reading the play several times while sitting about a table or in a group does help the actors to become familiar with their lines and with the play as a whole. Therefore, some directors continue the reading rehearsals for some time before going into the movement of

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1. Ward, Theatre for Children, p. 158.

the play. It is preferable, however, not to have too many reading rehearsals. Many directors have only one.

A third method of acquainting the cast with the play is simply to tell them the story. The chief advantage in this method is that it takes less time. The director may have the advantage of "selling the play" to the cast through this method, but he should be careful of creating false impressions. It is to be expected, of course, that the students will follow through by reading the play at home. However, the director who understands the adolescent and the many demands made upon his time knows that some will come to the next rehearsal without having read the play. This slows up the process, as they lack understanding of the characters and much must be done that should have been covered in the first rehearsal.

Several other matters must be considered and impressions made during the reading rehearsal. The first to be considered comes from the reading. The director has the opportunity of listening to pronunciation and enunciation. Corrections should be made and impressed upon the players at this time in order that a minimum of mispronunciation and poor enunciation will take place during the following rehearsals. Students should be encouraged to make notes on their copies of the script.

Other impressions should be made upon the members of the cast. The director should:

> . . . make clear that the pleasure of play production lies in the efficient, happy, conscientious working together of everyone toward the objective of putting on the best production of that particular play with that particular group under those particular circumstances. He should point out what constitutes a fine performance . . . [1]

Schedules of rehearsals should be given out, and the importance of attendance and promptness at all rehearsals should be stressed. This can be thoroughly impressed upon the students' minds only by going through the schedule and showing them that each rehearsal deals with a different phase of acting.

It has been mentioned that the production staff may be present at the reading rehearsal. It is imperative that they, as well as the actors, have a complete understanding of the play. Many directors, however, prefer to meet with the production staff before the first reading rehearsal, in order that they may begin their work as early as possible. It must be remembered that scenery, properties, and costumes must be ready for the dress rehearsals.

The Blocking-Out Rehearsals. In the chapter on "Preparing the Script"[2] the importance of planning the movement was stressed. These plans are made clear to the actors at the blocking out rehearsals.

> . . . the primary purpose, on which every one should be concentrating, is the idea of move-

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1. Ommanney, op. cit., p. 288.

2. Supra, Chapter VI.

> ment. For a short play, one rehearsal, or even a part of one rehearsal, may be sufficient. For a longer play, this process must be gone through for each act, perhaps several times. These rehearsals should not be stopped for long discussions of the characters and their relationships; there should be no special attempt to read the lines with proper emphasis, although actors should read as well as possible and gross errors should probably be corrected. The fewer times the actors are interrupted for anything but movement the better, for the secret of good rehearsals is to concentrate on one problem at a time.[1]

In order to explain the movement to the actors, without waste of time, the director must first help them to visualize the setting. He may show them scene designs or floor plans of the setting which have been made for the stage manager, or he may have a model stage arranged for this purpose. (In schools where the teacher is a full time director of dramatics, he may have the students build, to scale, a good sized model stage and make new settings for each play before it is produced. Some students, who could not otherwise participate, would enjoy this activity and thus feel that they were a part of the production.) On the other hand the director may give only a mental picture of the setting. In any case, it is necessary to mark the stage off in correct proportions. This may be done with chalk and/or permanent stage equipment, such as chairs, tables, benches, etc.

For this rehearsal, it is best that the director

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1. Milton Smith, Play Production, p. 92. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, inc., 1948.

remain on the stage with the actors, since he must talk with them frequently. (THE DIRECTOR MUST NEVER SHOUT.) As the players read the lines, they are given the directions for movement. They should first walk through the movement and then make a note of it on the script. These notes may be made quickly if students are taught to use symbols. For example: J X UL means Jane crosses up left; or B ⟲ ∨ means Bill turns and sits. Before the blocking out rehearsal begins the director must be sure that the players know the acting areas. Figures 7, 8, 9, 10 explain these areas.

ACTING AREAS

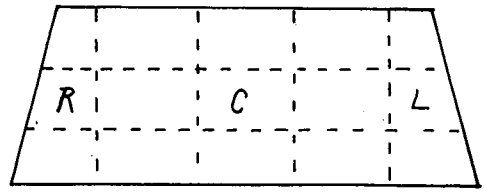
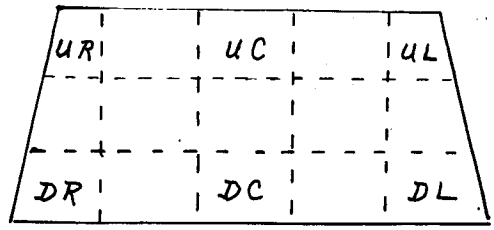


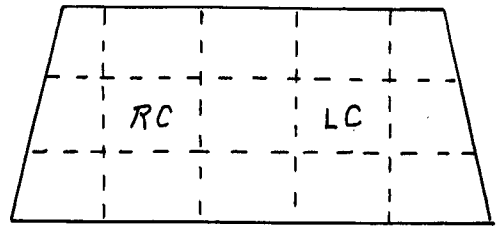
FIGURE 7. THE THREE BASIC ACTING AREAS



U stands for up.
D stands for down,
thus, Up Right,
Down Right, Up Left,
Down Left, Up Center,
Down Center.

FIGURE 8. UP STAGE AND DOWN STAGE AREAS

right center



left center

FIRGUE 9. RIGHT CENTER AND LEFT CENTER AREAS

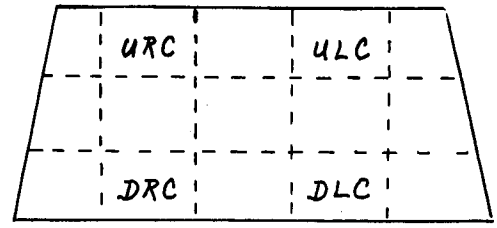


FIGURE 10. UP RIGHT CENTER, DOWN RIGHT CENTER, UP LEFT CENTER AND DOWN LEFT CENTER AREAS

Entrances and exits are marked similiarly. See Figure 11.

ENTRANCES AND EXITS

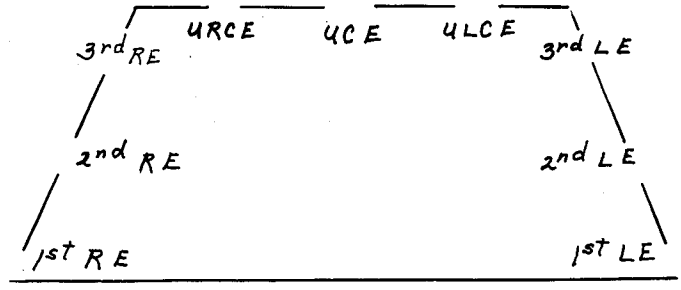


FIGURE 11. TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS USED FOR ENTRANCES AND EXITS

If the director has planned the movement with great care, little changing will have to be done during the rehearsal. However he should check on his grouping and the thrusts and counterthrusts of movement. If the stage is not balanced at all times he should make the change at once. Preparation on the part of the director strengthens the confidence of the pupils in him. They will lose this confidence if they must spend the entire rehearsal in walking about and "trying out" places while the director decides.

One act at a time should be rehearsed in the blocking out process, and it should be repeated until the movement is fixed in the minds of the actors. When each separate act has been rehearsed in this manner, the entire play (or a sequence of acts as: Acts 1 and 2, Acts 2 and 3, Acts 1 and 3) should be rehearsed for movement. The number of blocking out rehearsals will depend upon the play and the actors.

During all blocking out rehearsals the director should remember to:

> Watch carefully to see that the picture is a unit. Watch that, beside the actual person speaking being in a place where he can speak to the best advantage, the other characters are in a relatively beautiful arrangement from left to right and in depth. Watch that none of the actions telegraph the beginning of some coming turn. It must all happen as if it had fallen that way without having been worked on at all.[1]

The stage pictures should be varied and interesting. They must also be balanced and well composed. The director should make a thorough study of stage composition if he wishes to produce effective plays. The actors, as well as the properties and scenery, are a part of the composition. In the blocking out rehearsal, the director is concerned primarily with the actors in relation to stage balance. He must consider the importance of the character who is doing the speaking and the weight of conflict among the players. The strong character

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1. Crump, op. cit., p. 124.

should be given a position which will emphasize his importance and vice versa. Levels provide excellent means of variation and balance. Triangles in grouping should be used as much as possible as they emphasize strength and create the most pleasing pictures. Figure 12 is illustrative of triangular groupings of actors.

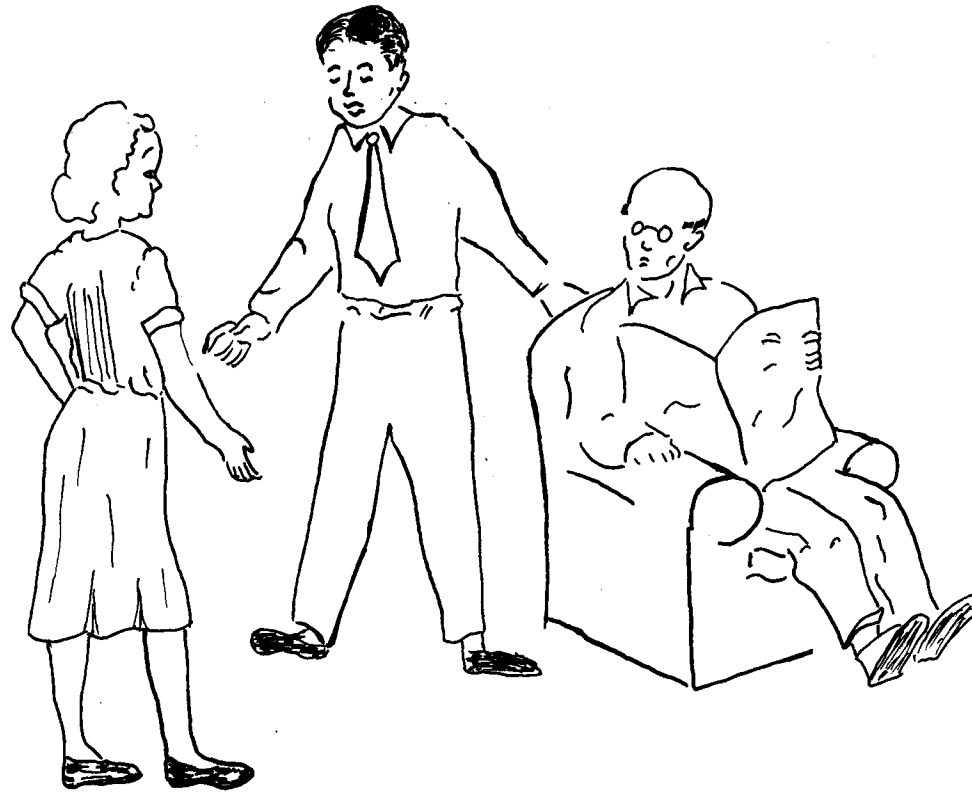

FIGURE 12. TRIANGULAR GROUPING OF ACTORS

The basic patterns of movement which are blocked out during these rehearsals should be well memorized before line rehearsals are begun.

The Line Rehearsals. The object of line rehearsals is to help the actors perfect their memorization. The director should set a definite time when all lines are to be memorized. This notice should be given well in advance. The first rehearsal with no scripts in hand will probably require much prompting, but it will help the actors to realize where they need to concentrate on memorization. For the sake of the other actors, they should memorize accurately, - in fact they should be word perfect in order to give cues correctly. During this time, the director works with small groups as well as large groups. This is a process of repetition. They work primarily on correctness of memorization and finally a group memory, as well as an individual memorization, is accomplished. During line rehearsals, the director moves out into the auditorium, but not too far away from the stage as he will need to advise the students frequently. As the memorization improves he moves about the auditorium checking from all points.

The Business Rehearsals. Many directors include the instructions for stage business[1] in the blocking out rehearsals. In truth, every director must do so to some extent as the business requires movement. However, it is better to work out only the movements from one part of the stage to another in the early rehearsals and concentrate on minor details and finer business at these later rehearsals. The business rehearsals should follow

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1. Infra, p. 215.

the memorization rehearsals as the actors will need to use their hands. This they cannot do until they have dropped their scripts.

> Stage business means stage action. That is, action of the hands and body, the character's mannerisms. It includes the working with and the handling of properties.[1]

> Definite business is that which is suggested by the lines of the play. John may say, "Are you cold, Elinor?" as he goes to close the window. Sometimes the definite business is written into the dialogue as "Henry, please stir the fire." Other times it is merely suggested. In either event, it should be executed at the psychological moment.[2]

> Indefinite business is that which is planned by the director or actor to help in creating characterization, atmosphere, or other elements that make the play come alive. It is usually the simple, every-day acts that we do thoughtlessly, as playing with our fingers, fixing our hair, tracing lines with a finger or a pencil, rolling a magazine and squinting through it, twirling a cane, or playing with a coat, hat, or gloves in our hands.[3]

If the property manager is able to supply the actual properties at this time, it is well to use them. The longer the actors have to familiarize themselves with the properties, the more naturally they will handle them. At least, adequate substitutes for the properties should be supplied when the business rehearsals begin.

During these rehearsals, director and actors con-

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1. Miriam A. Franklin, Rehearsal, p. 71. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1942.

2. Ibid., p. 73.

3. Ibid., p. 75.

centrate on the execution of the business. The handling of properties often suggests stage business, and it is created in a moment when the object is in hand. Much clever business should be introduced into the play. Very often the failing of an amateur production is in the lack of stage business. However, it must be used for some definite purpose or to build character; meaningless business is distracting to the audience.

The Characterization and Interpretation Rehearsals. During the first rehearsals, the actors have begun to crystallize the interpretation and characterization of their parts, but no emphasis has been placed upon either one. By this time they are familiar enough with the play to bring finer shades of meaning into their parts. They should strengthen their characterizations through the use of body, mind, and emotions. "Characterization as applied to the theatre, is a representation of a particular personality as it is interpreted by the actor."[1] The director should stimulate the actor's imagination concerning the character by asking questions such as: "How would he feel about this?" "What would he think?" "What kind of disposition would he have?" The actors should be encouraged to go over their entire script carefully and study it for all indications of characterization. During these rehearsals, the director should rehearse with small groups and individuals as well

1. Jack Stuart Knapp, The Technique of Stage Make-up, p. 22. Boston: Walter H. Baker Company, 1942.

as holding the act rehearsals. With these small groups, characterization and interpretation may be discussed; bits of business which are characteristic of particular characters may be worked out; and posture and carriage may be checked. The latter, of course, should be in keeping with the character portrayed.

The director should listen to the lines for faulty interpretation. If he feels that an actor does not understand a line, he should ask him a question, regarding the thought, and have him answer it. There are numerous details to be checked during these rehearsals: gestures; diction; voice; pauses; facial expressions; and emphasis or pointing[1] of lines. If casting has been done properly, there will be variety of tone and variety in rate of delivery among the actors. This can be emphasized and made clear to the actors at this time. Some of the actors may be dropping last words of sentences or not attacking lines well. Attention should be called to such faults and actors encouraged to correct them.

The director should also pay special attention to bit parts at this time. These parts should give color to the performance. The minor parts, no matter how small, should be as well portrayed as the leads. Mobs, likewise, should be kept in character. Every move of every member of the mob is important in the general effect. They must never be static but portray life and interest at all times.

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1. Infra, p. 214.

When each actor is reacting to the other characters, the group is ready to move into "perfect" rehearsals. In writing of such rehearsals, Bernard Shaw says:

> At these you must . . . sit in the auditorium with a big notebook, and from that time forth never interrupt a scene, not allow anyone else to interrupt it or try back. When anything goes wrong, or any improvement occurs to you, make a note; and at the end of the act go on the stage and explain your notes to the actors. Don't criticize . . .
>
> Remember . . . that you must not tell an actor too much all at once. Not more than two or three important things can be borne at one rehearsal; and don't mention trifles, such as slips in business or in words, in a heart-broken desperate way, as if the world were crumbling in ruins . . . Be prepared for the same mistake being repeated time after time, and your directions being forgotten until you have given them three or four days running.
>
> If you get angry, and complain that you have repeatedly called attention, etc., like a schoolmaster, you will destroy the whole atmosphere in which art breathes, and make a scene which is not in the play, and a very disagreeable and invaribly unseccessful scene at that.
>
> . . . you must watch, watch, watch, like a cat at a mouse hole, and make very well-considered notes. To some of them you will append a "Rehearse this"; and at the end of the act you will ask them to go through the bit to get it right.[1]

The best directors agree with Mr. Shaw in regard to becoming angry. They never lose their tempers or shout. They talk the situations over with the actors or actor quietly. This necessitates going to the stage. It is ideal if the electricians can connect a telephone from

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1. Bernard Shaw, The Art of Rehearsal, pp. 6-9. New York: Samuel French, 1928.

the stage to the auditorium. If this is possible, the director may speak directly to the individual actor concerned, quickly, at any time.

The Scene Rehearsals. Important scenes within the acts usually need concentrated effort. Special rehearsals are held for these scenes in order to build climaxes. Such rehearsals can be run in between the other rehearsals or a special time may be set for them.

The Continuity Rehearsals. This is "An almost uninterrupted 'run-through' of the whole play, for the purpose of preserving continuity (it is most important that the actors should be able to view the play as a whole), and firmly fixing the results of detailed rehearsal."[1] The director will also want to be sure that the play is properly proportioned, - that some parts do not stand out too much above others. These rehearsals are a means of synchronizing and unifying the whole performance. Special attention will be given to emphasis, tone, mood, and tempo. Needless to say the director should have been checking from every angle in the auditorium at various times, but during the continuity rehearsals he should move frequently around the sides and back of the auditorium checking sightlines and projection of voice. He should remember that the audience is seated, therefore, he should sit as well as stand in various places.

The Technical Rehearsals. Separate rehearsals of

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1. Jeffreys and Stopford, op. cit., p. 19.

the lighting and stage crews should be held before the dress rehearsals. Careful planning of back stage organization should produce as smooth a performance back stage as the actors produce before the audience. Nothing should be left to chance. It is supposed that the crew managers have delegated all duties and planned the changes of scenery and lighting with the crew members. It is the director's duty to give them the opportunity to execute their duties, to check on their efficiency, and to practice for smoothness.

> The director should remember one more thing. He and his cast have had, as a rule, a certain number of weeks to learn the play, its implications and its subtleties. The members of the crew who arrive to set up the show for the first time have not had this intimate relationship with the script. Enough time should be allotted to make them familiar with and comfortable in the handling of effects, shifts of scene, and so on. A good "dim" on the average dimming board is a difficult process; it is often integrally associated with the mood of the scene in which it occurs. There is no reason why a director should expect an electrician to perform this job sensitively the first time he tries it, any more than he should expect an actor to give a finished performance at the first reading.[1]

The rehearsals with the scenery and lighting crews are best held without the actors at least one time, because the director will probably consume a great deal of time in talking with the crews. The timing of all cues, -

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1. John Gassner, Producing the Play, together with Philip Barber, New Scene Technician's Handbook, pp. 272-273. New York: The Dryden Press, Publishers, 1941.

for curtain, light, and sound, should receive especial attention. Then the technical rehearsal may be held with the actors. Unexpected problems may arise when the actors and scenery meet for the first time, but if careful plans were made from the beginning, they are usually adjusted easily. It has been mentioned that as many of the properties as possible should be put in the hands of the actors in earlier rehearsals. Now, all properties should be ready, - stage properties as well as personal properties. Therefore, the property crew also has a technical rehearsal when lights, scenery, and actors meet.

A technical rehearsal for costumes may be held separately, without light, scenery, and properties in order to check on details. If possible this should be done about two weeks before the dress rehearsal in order to give the costume crew ample time to make adjustments and changes. Later a costume and lighting rehearsal should be held, for the lighting may change the appearance of the costumes entirely.

It is advisable to hold one make-up rehearsal before the dress rehearsal, also. At this rehearsal no other crews need be present and no lines need to be said. The rehearsal provides the make-up crew and the actors an opportunity to practice the technique of make-up. The director should check each finished make-up under a strong light. Later, if time allows, a costume, make-up,

and lighting rehearsal may be combined.

All technical rehearsals should be held in plenty of time to make adjustments. This will avoid much of the confusion which otherwise is so often present at the dress rehearsals.

The Dress Rehearsals. A dress rehearsal is a production which includes everything except the audience. It is foolish to hold only one dress rehearsal. At the very least, there should be two, - but a week of dress rehearsals would be better. Everything should be in place and in order, there should be no substitutes, - the dress rehearsal is complete. The director should make no changes, and the performance should not be interrupted. Any advice or criticism should be given after the rehearsal.

> Be careful, very careful, that your suggestions are both constructive and inoffensive. A terrible complex can be started in your actors if you are not kind. Do not call anyone by name while all are present. Make your individual suggestions privately to each actor. Give only general criticisms that concern everyone when in the group.[1]

It may be wise to hold the conference with actors and crews the following day, since the dress rehearsal is time consuming, and children must not be kept too long. The group will then feel that they have more time for discussion. The second dress rehearsal should, therefore, show an improvement over the first. The fewer

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1. Crump, op. cit., pp. 172-173.

mistakes made during dress rehearsals, the better the final performance will be. The theory that a bad dress rehearsal means a good performance is absolute superstition and should be discouraged.

During dress rehearsals, the director is concerned with the total effect of the performance. Minor details, which he has not foreseen in earlier rehearsals, must not be added or changed now; the actors cannot remember a multitude of "little things" at the eleventh hour. Such additions and changes only add to confusion. In checking the total effect, the director must see that the mechanical and creative efforts are blended. This fusing of all the parts is the most important of all. The director should constantly move about the auditorium, checking every scene from the viewpoint of the audience. While checking all sightlines, he must also be listening for projection of the actors' voices. The prompter, of course, is ever ready to take notes, from the director, on the major things which must be corrected.

Several other important things which should be considered during dress rehearsals are: timing of the play, backstage deportment, audience laughter, and curtain calls. The approximate playing time of the performance should be determined. Each dress rehearsal should be timed by scenes, acts, and as a whole. The stage manager will keep a separate timing of the shifting of scenes. A stop watch is valuable for this purpose. Each dress

rehearsal should be speeded up, until at the final rehearsal, the minimum of time is consumed. Backstage movement should be planned and organized.

> Actors should rehearse getting into positions for entrances in time and without noise, . . . They must get into entrance positions without creating confusion, or without conflicting with actors who are making exits. If an actor goes off on one side of the stage and enters on the other, he should rehearse this change of position. If he has to make a costume or make-up change, he needs to rehearse this, probably several times. Noises that do not seem noticeable in rehearsals, when the director is constantly interrupting, often seem very loud in the silence of an attentive audience. Therefore, if an actor needs to cross behind a drop or a wall, he must be sure that the audience will not hear his footsteps. In fact, the footsteps of all the actors are a thing that should be thought about; and their noise should be eliminated, both on stage and off, by proper shoes, or by a ground cloth, or by strips of carpet.[1]

Laughs cannot be forced or called from the audience at any particular place. Therefore, the director should prepare the cast to stop at unexpected places and wait for laughter, or applause, to subside. He may do this by arranging for an indication of laughter before the rehearsal begins. In other words, he may tell the actors that when he rattles a tamborine or hits upon a box they are to suppose the audience is laughing. The actors must then cease their lines, but hold the stage picture until the laughter subsides sufficiently for them to be heard. From the beginning, actors should be trained never to lose character. They should assume their stage

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1. Smith, op. cit., pp. 124-125.

character long before making an entrance and keep it at all times before the audience. Some directors prefer to invite a selected audience for the last rehearsal. When this is done, their reactions may be noted both by actors and director.

If curtain calls are used, they should be rehearsed. Otherwise the curtain may open on some very queer scenes indeed. Every actor should receive definite instructions as to "how" and "when" he is to take a curtain call. He should also be instructed as to "what to do." Curtain calls for school productions, if used, should not be prolonged. One or two quick, effective calls are sufficient.

CHAPTER IX

DESIGNING, BUILDING, AND HANDLING THE SCENERY

While rehearsals are in progress, the production crews work hard and fast. If possible, research and designing for the set should take place before rehearsals begin in order that sketches and working drawings may be turned over to the carpenters as soon as possible. In some schools, the director is also the art director; in other schools the art teacher or a capable student may direct the designing. Any research which is necessary to make the setting authentic as to period, or to better understand the type of setting, should usually be done first. This is especially true for school productions. Therefore, the art director should get the research committee busy as soon as the play has been selected. They will make sketches and take notes from reliable sources. These are turned over to the designers. The scenery designers work under the art director at this time, - later they paint the actual scenery and become members of the scenery crew. See Figure 1. (p. 44)[1]

Before the designers can go to work they must know the play thoroughly.

> The most important feature in designing a scene successfully is that it should conform to all the requirements of the action of the play and be completely suitable both in planning and colour to create the right atmosphere. That is why it is so essential to read the

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1. Supra, p. 44.

> play, hear the music, see the dances, and get thoroughly acquainted with the author's or composer's conception, in order that each scene shall receive every consideration as to suitability of treatment. Designers must endeavor to carry the play with them in every stroke of the brush.[1]

If the director does not make the designs himself, he at least makes rough sketches which he turns over to the art director at their first meeting. The art director and designers attempt to carry out these ideas, first on paper in the form of sketches, paintings, and floor plans, and then on flats[1] and other constructed pieces of stage scenery. While making the designs, they must constantly keep in mind that these pictures must be transferable to the media of scene construction. They must also have an understanding of the types of stage settings.

The setting is the visual environment of the action of the play. There are three kinds, or types of settings: 1. realistic, 2. suggestive, and 3. stylistic. A realistic setting reproduces a place existing off the stage as it is in life. The success of this type of setting lies in the completeness of detail. It must be authentic. A suggestive setting attempts no completeness but only suggests a locale off the stage. Necessity often brings this type of setting into use, for example, a play in which there are many scenes. In this setting, the lines are suggested, and the attention is

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1. Doris Zinkeisen, Designing for the Stage, p. 7. New York: The Studio Publications Inc. "n.d."

centered on one thing such as a window or a column. The imagination of the spectator fills in the outline. A stylized setting covers many scenes. It may project the mood of the play, using color or line to do so; it may base its style on exaggeration or distortion of size or shapes; it may be symbolic, based on symbols in the play; it may use masks which are representative of weird characters and through which voices seem to come.

Detailed information on scene designing is not necessary on the part of the student. However, he must understand the types of drawings to be used. First, is the sketch or painting which gives an idea of the picture of the stage as it will look when finished. Second, is the floor plan which interprets the sketch in terms of scenery. It is a bird's eye view of the setting.

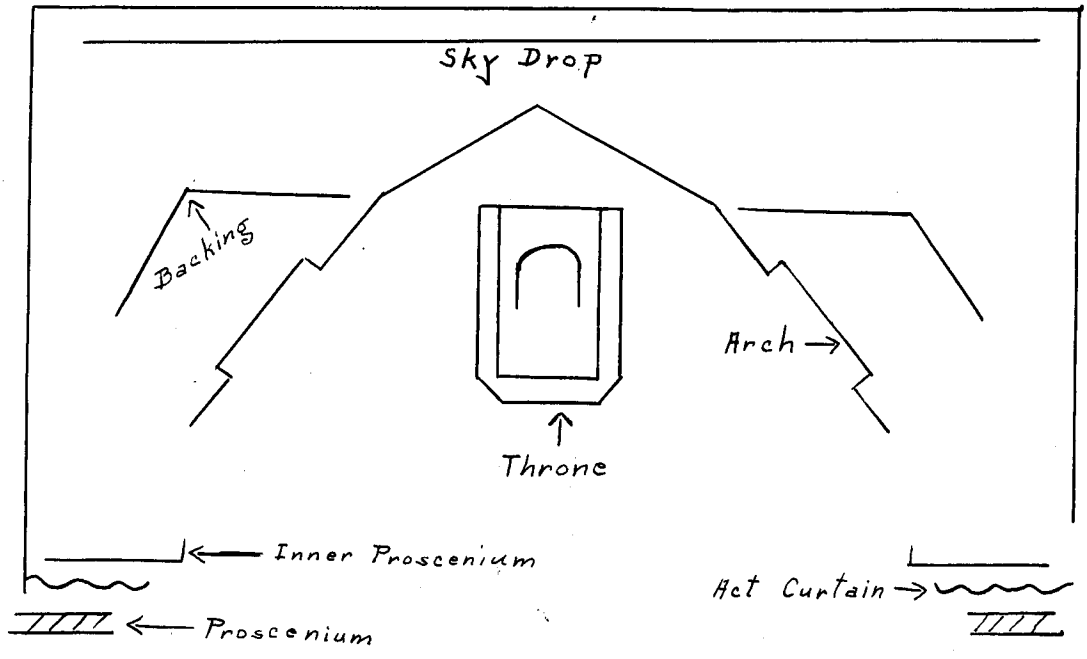

FIGURE 13. A FLOOR PLAN

Floor plans are indispensable for any production, no matter how simple it may be. The floor plan shows every drape, flat, drop, border, etc. in its exact position.

The third type of drawing is the elevation of the floor plan. This is a picture design which changes the point of view to that of the audience. It is an exact picture of the set.

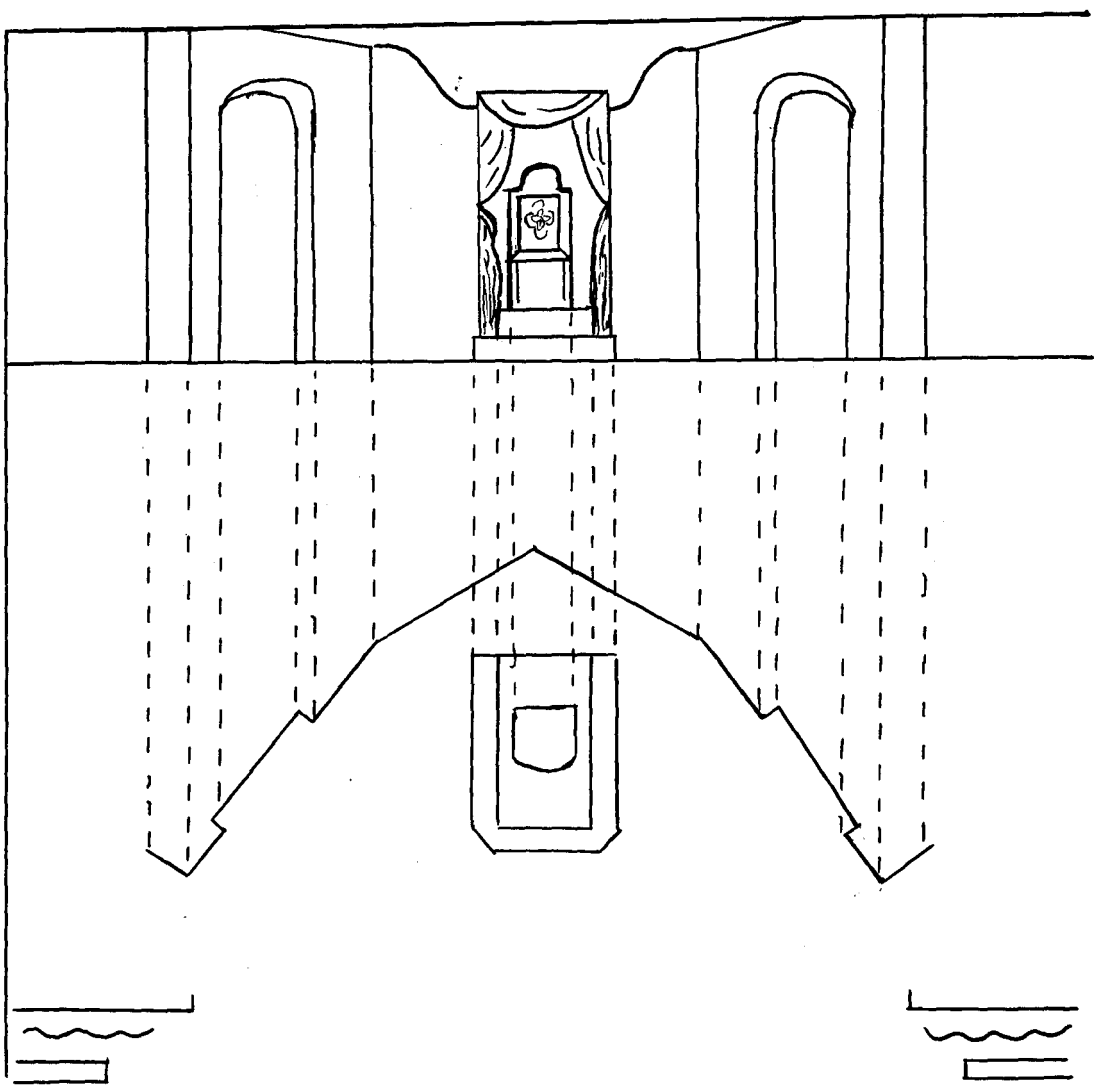

FIGURE 14. AN ELEVATION OF A FLOOR PLAN

In the elevation the pieces are merely raised up. They are seen as by the person who is sitting in the exact center of the back row.

Some directors use a fourth method, by designing and building a model stage on which the pieces of scenery may actually be moved about. This is an excellent idea, especially for schools where all or many students participate in the production of a play.

The finished sketches and drawings are turned over to the technician or head carpenter. In most schools, the stage manager serves in this capacity, although a separate person may be appointed if so desired. If the art director has technical ability, it is well for him to serve as technician or stage manager, so that he may carry his designs to completion.

> A technician who builds from his own designs has a great advantage over the one who carries out the designs of another. An artist who can construct usually turns out more delightful settings than does the prosaic builder. If a line or a color effect is a bit disappointing when the scenery comes on the stage, he is free to change it without calling back the designer . . . At all events, the artist should supervise the execution of his drawings, for the unimaginative builder can ruin an inspired design.[1]

Scenery is the background behind the action. It usually takesthe form of flats or solid pieces. There are three kinds of scenery: 1. flat, or standing, 2. solid, and 3. hanging. Flat pieces of scenery stand on the floor and are supported by braces from behind, -

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1. Ward, Theatre for Children, p. 208.

or two flat pieces may be hinged or lashed together with heavy cord and stood in the form of an open book.

> This includes all flats - screenlike pieces made of light wood frames covered on one side with canvas or muslin. Flats may be plain or made with openings into which door and window frames may be inserted, or in front of which a fireplace may be placed, and they may be hinged together for use as backings. This category includes, besides different types of flats, all cut-out pieces, such as groundrows, made of wall board cut and painted to suggest walls, fences, distant landscape, etc. These, like the flats, have frames which will keep them upright if they are supported by stage braces.[1]

The flat is the basic type of all scenic construction. Figure 15. (p. 130) shows a working drawing of a simple and economical type of flat. The wood for making a flat should be well seasoned, select Northern White Pine. This is usually 1-inch by 3-inches and as long as the flat is to be in height. If a very light type of scenery is desired, material 1-inch by 2-inches may be used. These pieces of wood material are called battens. It will be noticed in Figure 18. (p. 132) that the bottom batten (called the rail) extends all the way across, and that the side pieces (called stiles) are placed above it. The stage manager should see that the flats are always constructed in this way, because in moving the scenery this end receives the most wear. If the side piece, or stile, came to the bottom, it would soon pull away from the rail. The battens for building the framework of a flat should never be crooked or warped.

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1. Hewitt, op. cit., p. 133.

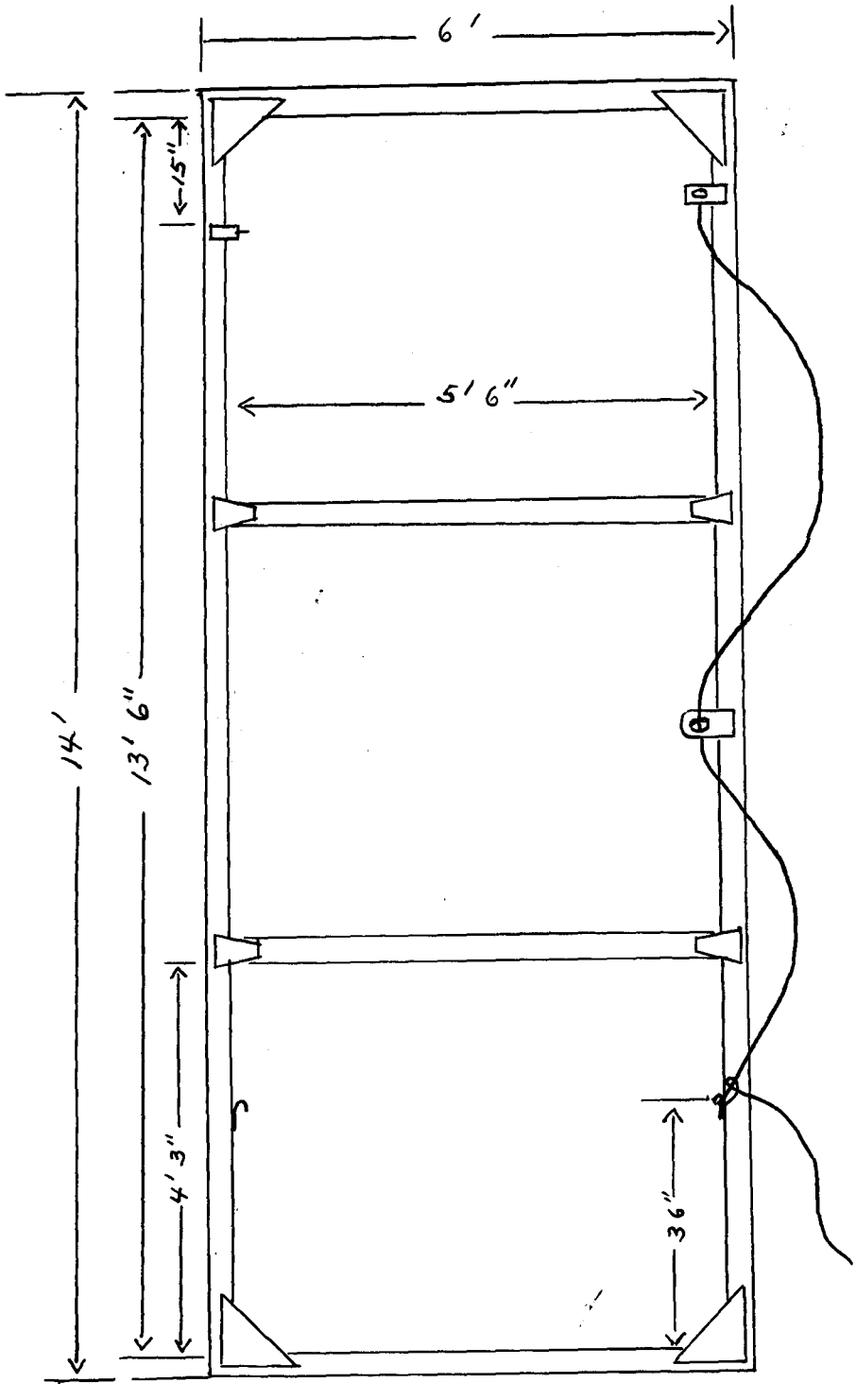

FIGURE 15. A WORKING DRAWING OF A FLAT

The butt joint is best to use in making scenery for the school stage, because it is simple to make. Corrugated fasteners are used for temporarily joining the pieces.

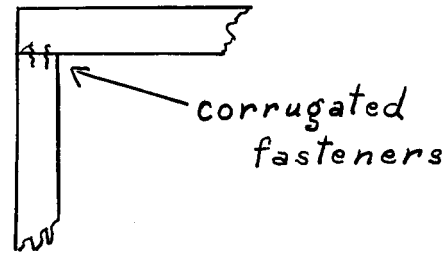

FIGURE 16. A BUTT JOINT

Corner blocks or keystones are placed over the corrugated fasteners. In order to avoid splitting the lumber, the screws or nails should be staggered. Ordinarily, six screws or ten clout nails are used for corner blocks. Clout nails should be used on a concrete floor. They turn up at the bottom and hold the wood fast as if it were riveted.

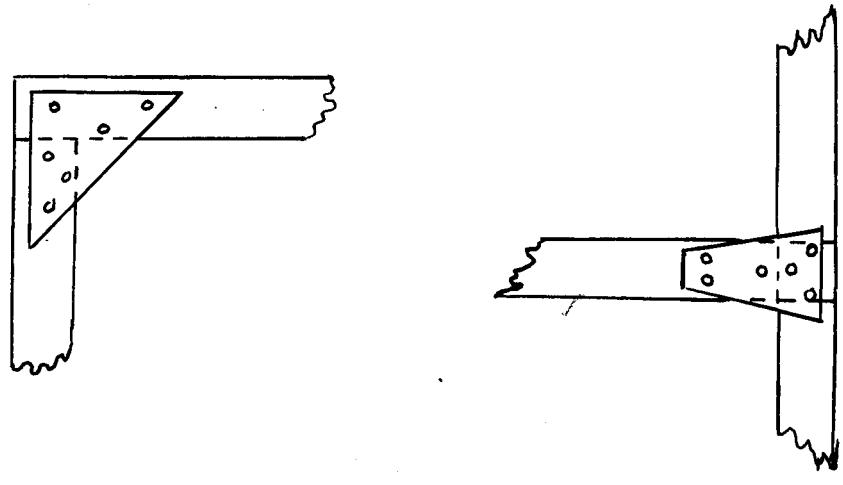

FIGURE 17. CORNER BLOCK AND KEYSTONE

The dimensions of a flat may vary from eight to twenty-two feet in height and from one to six feet in width. If the construction of scenery is new to the students, a flat should be made up and assembled as a demonstration. The crew members can then use this flat as a guide in further construction. Students should also know the terms used for the various pieces which make up a flat. These terms are illustrated in Figure 18.

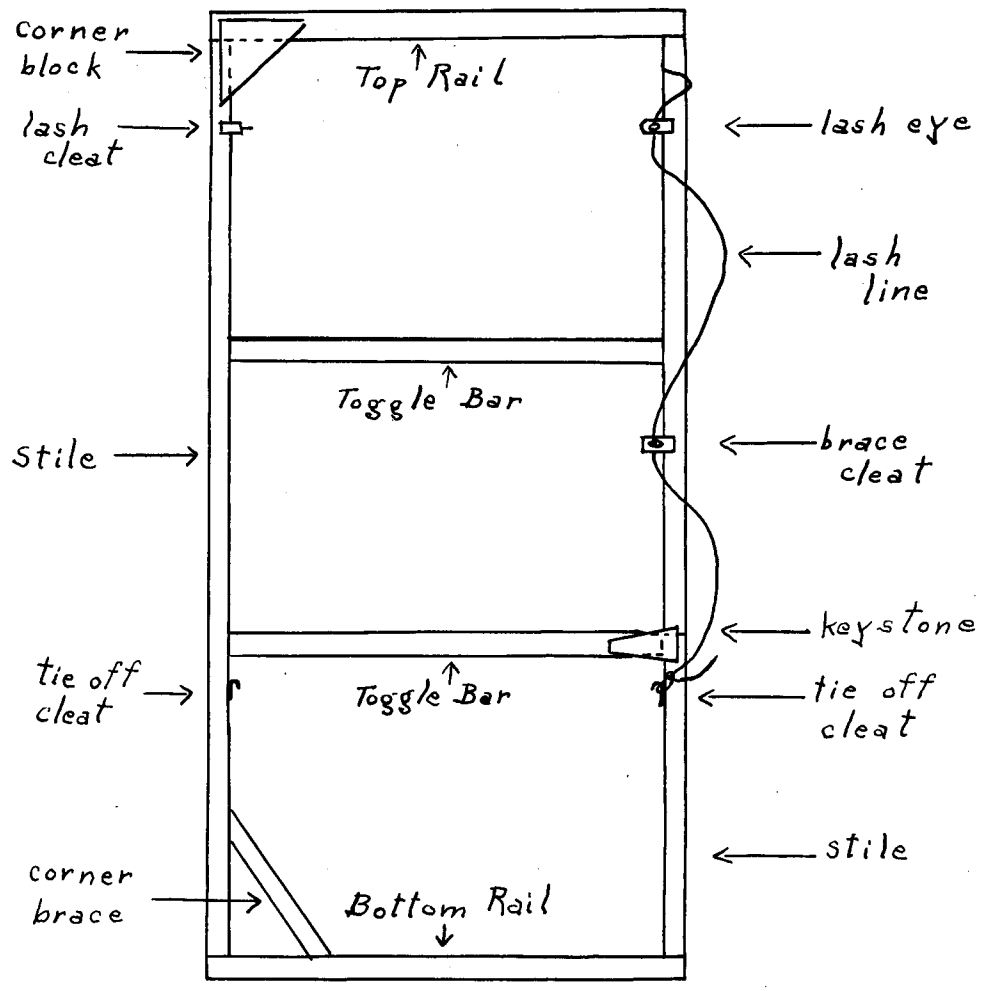

FIGURE 18. TERMS USED FOR PARTS OF A FLAT

When the framework of the flat has been completed, it is covered with 6 oz. laundry-bag muslin. This may be purchased in bolts of 45 to 50 yards. It is 72" in width.

> First the frame is placed on the floor or, better, on three wide saw-horses, with the smooth side up. That is, the side of the frame with the corner blocks and keystones on it is turned down.
>
> A piece of muslin about two inches too large for the frame is then cut, laid on the frame, and attached to it temporarily by means of a tack, only partly driven in, at each of the four corners. The muslin need not be tightly stretched, as the later "sizing" and painting will take up a surprisingly large amount of slack. The next step is to place tacks, only partly driven in, all the way around the frame, thus temporarily attaching the muslin to the frame. These tacks should be placed at intervals of about five or six inches, and one and a half inches from the outer edge of the frame. In order to avoid unevenness in the muslin, it may first be tacked on one end, then on the other, then on one side, and then on the other side.[1]

The muslin is then glued to the frame. The margin of two or three inches, which is allowed for shrinkage, is called the "purchase." This is raised and the glue is placed on the outer surface of the stile or rail. Then the muslin is pressed down upon it.

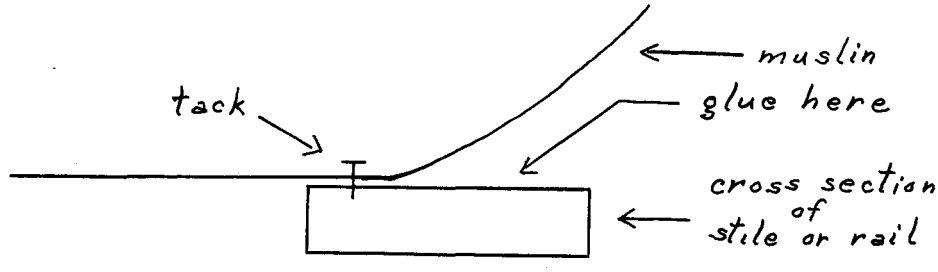

FIGURE 19. GLUEING THE MUSLIN IN PLACE

1. Seely and Hackett, op. cit., p. 439.

The glue should be hot, and the crew members should work fast. About two feet at a time should be glued. When the glue has been placed all the way around the flat, the purchase of the muslin is pulled down and turned under the flat. Then it is pressed down with a small batten. When the glue has dried, the purchase should be trimmed about one eighth of an inch from the edge. A very sharp knife should be used for this purpose as the glue will cause it to become dull.

Sizing is the next step. This is a stiffening process which prepares the muslin for painting. Size is prepared from Gelatine Flake glue, water, and Formaldehyde. Proportions may be as follows: one and one half pints melted Gelatine Flake glue, ten quarts boiling water, and one tablespoon Formaldehyde. The size is applied to the entire surface of muslin and allowed to dry. The slack in the muslin will be taken up in the drying. The flat is then ready to be painted as the designers have planned.

Scenery used for the school stage should be of the simplest construction. Since many of the scenery crew will be inexperienced, the success of the construction depends upon this simplicity. It should also be economical both in material and labor. Materials must be durable and light in weight. All flat pieces must be made so that they can be stored easily in as little space as possible.

> At the start of a school theatre venture, it is wise to be satisfied with curtain draperies and only such additional articles of scenery as can be turned out in the school shop. As the endeavor grows and money becomes available, the stage can be equipped with a permanent set of flats so plastic in execution that they can be used for innumerable plays and types of plays. . . Of course, in the ideally organized school theatre, all this is done within the school.[1]

It has been stated that there are three types of scenery: flat, solid, and hanging. A very brief description of the construction of flat scenery has been given above. Hanging scenery consists of draperies, drops and ceilings. Draperies may be straight, enclosing the stage in various forms. They may also be used as borders and in sections. It is surprising what can be done with draperies. They are often used to represent columns or trees.

Drops may be used to represent sky, mountains, trees, etc.

> A drop is a wide decorated curtain that hangs from above the stage and reaches to the floor. It has a heavy batten or board at the top and at the bottom. The bottom batten keeps the drop from curling; to the top one ropes are attached for fastening the drop to the gridiron, so that it may be raised into the gridiron when not in use. The drop is used for a background to an exterior set, such as a garden, river, or forest scene. It may also be used to represent a hallway or other bare interior. A drop may be used as a background for a pageant or for a fantasy.[2]

Ceilings are hung from the gridiron and lowered to rest, horizontally, across the tops of flats which en-

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1. Collins, op. cit., pp. 56-57.

2. Hedde and Brigance, op. cit., p. 535.

close the acting area. Thus, they mask off the top of the stage.

Solid pieces of scenery consist of platforms, step units, fireplaces, wells, trees, rocks, etc. These are built to suggest the realistic form. They are usually separate pieces set on casters. Platforms, steps and parellels[1] provide different levels for the actors.

> . . . The value of a stage on different levels was one of the early and important discoveries of Stanislavski; such a stage provides interesting pattern, accommodates more actors without their obscuring one another, and assists the actor's movements and postures by giving them objects to negotiate, whereas the bare, flat stage leaves them adrift.[2]

The crew which constructs the scenery is usually the stage crew during rehearsals and performance. They are responsible for setting up the scenery, changing it, and striking, i.e. taking it down. There are three ways of changing scenery: 1. running, 2. flying, and 3. rolling. Running is the most common method and is used for standing pieces of scenery. The scenery is pulled quickly across the stage by hand. There is a trick of balance in running scenery. The faster one moves, the easier it is to handle the pieces. After the pieces have been run into place, they are lashed together at right angles or braced with stage braces. Every stage should have a soft white pine floor in which to fasten braces. Flats which are run in often have a ceiling

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1. Infra, p. 214.

2. Jeffreys and Stopford, op. cit., p. 73.

which helps to hold the flats steady.

Flying scenery is the method used for changing hanging pieces. By this method, drapes, borders, drops, and sometimes flats are pulled into the loft over the stage and stored out of sight of the audience. When the piece is needed for a setting, it is quickly lowered into place. Back walls are often flied including doors, windows, fireplaces, etc., when they are framed together.

Rolling scenery is the method used for solid pieces which are very large or irregular in shape, therefore, heavy or awkward to handle. Solid pieces are placed on casters which will lock when in place. An entire set, or section of a set, may be rolled on wagons. Wagons are narrow platforms designed to carry scenery.

The average production which is set up in flats will usually be predominently run. A show with many scenes will be predominently flied. A combination of running and flying may be used. One scene may be flied while another is run. Rolling is a smoother method of clearing the stage and is being used more and more.

The size of the stage crew will depend upon the amount of shifting to be done.

> . . . the stage manager and his crew should rehearse these shifts as carefully as the actors rehearse their lines and action. Backstage activity during a performance should of course be as noiseless as possible and should consume no more time than is absolutely necessary. Intermissions between acts of a full-length play should never last longer than ten minutes, and between scenes within an act they should be much shorter, never

longer than two or three minutes.[1]

Backstage efficiency is necessary in all things. There should be a definite place for stacking the scenery when not in use. Pieces which are to be used should be stacked against the left wall and pieces which have already been used (dead pieces) are stacked against the right wall. This is not possible on all stages, but the stage manager should plan the best arrangement possible for his particular stage. As soon as the performance is over, the stage crew should strike the scenery, stack it, sweep the backstage area of the stage floor, and leave everything in perfect order. If there is a store room for the scenery, it may be taken there on the following day.

In this chapter, the writer has touched upon some of the fundamentals of setting the stage. Without study and training, the teacher-director should hesitate to begin with complicated stage settings. He should begin with plays which call for simple setting and gradually build up his knowledge and technique. Experience will be an invaluable aid, but it is a slow process of learning. Many books on the subject are obtainable and should be read by the teacher-director. However, there is nothing so valuable as participation in courses in scenery design and stagecraft which give practical experiences in designing, building, and handling the scenery.

CHAPTER X

ASSEMBLING AND HANDLING THE PROPERTIES

Many varied duties fall to the property manager and his crew members. It takes talent, instinct and ingenuity to dress a set properly. Unless accurately and tastefully chosen, the properties may mar all the good work of the stage crew.

Before the property manager and his crew can go to work, they must have a thorough understanding of the meaning of "properties" or "props" as they are often called. Dictionaries define stage properties as "all the adjuncts of a play except the painted scenery and the costumes of the actors."

> Properties are classified under four heads.
>
> Scene-props include all those things used to complete, or "dress" the stage set. Examples are the pictures on the wall, furniture, books and bookshelves, window curtains, rugs, flowers, shrubbery, grass, barrels, boxes, garbage cans, etc.
>
> Hand-props are those items handled by the actor, or carried on or off stage by him. Telegrams, letters, cigars, cigarettes, matches, articles of clothing (carried and not worn), food, dishes, etc.
>
> Sound-effects, whether representing fish, fowl or flesh, are considered properties. Noises of machines, creaking doors, tolling bells, gun-fire - every sound of nature or man are problems for the property technician.
>
> Visual-effects, not caused by light, are classified as properties. The rain falling outside the window, the snow or water on the coat of an actor entering the scene, smoke and steam, are examples.[1]

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1. Gassner and Barber, op. cit., p. 588.

The first duty of the property manager is to read the script through word by word and mark it plainly with colored pencil wherever properties are mentioned. Then, going through his marked script again, he will make a list of all the properties mentioned or alluded to which will be used by the actors or which will add to the setting. He may make this list in four columns using the classifications mentioned above: 1. scene props, 2. hand props, 3. sound effects, and 4. visual effects, - or he may use the following form of classification:

SET PROPS		HAND PROPS
Properties which remain on stage		Properties which are carried on by the actors.
Functional Properties used in action	Decorative Properties not used in action	Names of characters who use each property.
		Side of stage from which it is carried.

The property manager should watch several rehearsals and add to his list anything which the rehearsal calls to his attention and which he may have omitted from his original list. He then:

> . . . makes a diagram of each set used in the play, indicating the exact position of each piece of furniture and of each article placed on it. It will include practical props used in the action and dressing props. She consults this plot as she goes about setting the stage to check that everything is in place.[1]

The combination of the list and the diagrams when properly completed is called the "prop plot."

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1. Glenn R. Webster and William Wetzel, Scenery Simplified, p. 134. Franklin, Ohio: Eldridge Entertainment House, Inc., 1934.

Figure 20. is an illustration of a diagram for the prop plot.

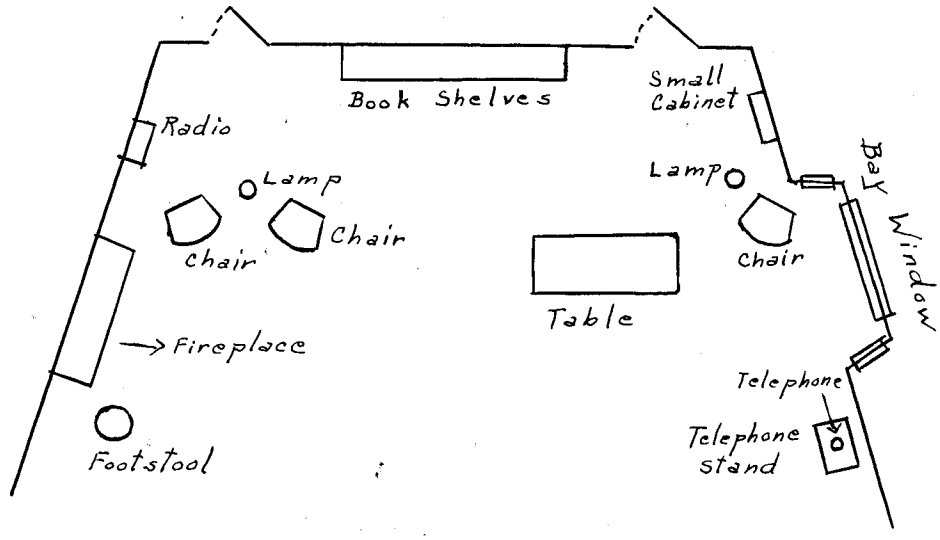

FIGURE 20. DIAGRAM FOR A PROPERTY PLOT

When the prop plot is complete, the manager should check it with the director who may make some changes or additions. After the director has checked the prop plot, the property manager and the stage manager should go over the list together in order to make sure that scenery and properties are in keeping. This done, it is time to call a meeting of the property crew. Special duties for assembling the properties will be assigned. They may be obtained by borrowing, renting, buying, or making. In assigning duties to the crew members, the manager will designate certain things which obviously must be bought. (Of course, he will check with the business manager first.) He will make other definite assignments for making properties and for renting or borrowing them.

The crew members should go to work on their assign-

ments immediately in order to have them assembled for the first rehearsal at which the director wishes to use hand props. From the time the props are first used in rehearsals to the final production, the manager and his crew members should attend rehearsals.

> Observe the actors in the business given them by the director to see if all props as built and selected will actually work. More often than not the director will fail to anticipate actual size or shape of scene and hand-props, and the actor's business or the properties will have to be changed in some details.[1]

Before the first technical rehearsal, another meeting of the property crew should be held. At this meeting, definite duties will be assigned for each crew member to assume during all rehearsals and the final performance. Each person will be made responsible for the placing, care, and distribution of certain properties. As much care should go into the planning for moving and placing the properties as goes into the setting, striking, and stacking of the scenery. All large pieces of set props should be stacked in downstage areas, if possible, in order to avoid conflict of stage crew and property crew. As soon as the curtain closes on an act or scene, and the stage manager gives the signal that all is clear, the furniture is moved on to the center of the stage against the front curtain. This area of the stage is usually clear and therefore the property crew will not be in the way of the stage crew. Not only is this

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1. Barber, op. cit., p. 589.

true, but when properties are very large they often cannot be brought through doors of the set after it is in place.

Scenes must be changed in the minimum of time, therefore, crews must co-operate throughout. The shifting is rehearsed in the technical rehearsals. Each crew member learns the best time to perform his duties. For example, it is obvious that a member of the property crew cannot put pots of flowers on a wall until the wall has been set up by the stage crew. To stand and wait, with the flowers in hand, would be ridiculous. The property man will learn to time his duties so that he will use every second to advantage. All small properties are placed first, if possible, then the large pieces are placed against the walls after the stage crew has finished. Property crew and stage crew should use a different color of chalk for marking on the floor the places for scenery and properties. These chalk lines should be remarked after each rehearsal.

Furniture should be covered when stacked off stage. This not only preserves the finish of the furniture, but discourages actors and crew members from sitting on it.

When members of the property committee have caught the true spirit of the theatre, they treat the distribution of hand props with the greatest importance. They realize what ludicrous situations are often caused by an actor appearing on stage without a prop which is necessary to the words and action of the play. There-

fore, each crew member who is responsible for certain hand props sees to it that "his" actor has the article in hand well in time before he makes his entrance. Once the property is in the actor's hand, the property man keeps his eye on it to be sure that it remains there until the actor makes his entrance. Actors too often lay a property down - "for a moment," - and then forget to pick it up again, but the property man should never forget.

There are several ways of distributing hand properties. If the cast is small and there is room for it, a table is placed in the downstage area on one or both sides of the stage. Properties are arranged on the tables and chalk marks are drawn around them. Then the word to identify each article is placed within the outline on the table. This provides an orderly system of arrangement, gives the property man a check on missing articles and indicates the spot for the property to be placed when the actor returns it. Cards may also be placed on each article giving the name of the actor who uses it, and the act in which it is used. Wherever, possible, shelves should be built on the left wall, downstage. During rehearsals and performance, properties may be systematically arranged on the shelves, but they must always be stored in a locked room or cabinet between rehearsals to insure against lost or straying properties. A crew member presides over the prop tables and shelves,

giving the properties out as needed, and seeing that they are returned.

When the backstage area is small or when large numbers are used in the cast, the property tables are not always practical. In this case, it is usually better for the property men to meet their assigned actors at the place of entrance and give them the necessary properties. This cannot be done for mobs, however. For example, if there is a mob scene in which the actors carry spears, arrangements should be made for these actors to report to a crew member at a certain time and place to receive them. No chances should be taken on forgetfulness. The property man in charge should keep a list and check each name off as the actor receives his spear. Thus, if one is left over, he knows exactly which actor must be found and given the property.

Some hand props are very closely allied to the costumes. Members of the property crew who are in charge of these will take them to the dressing rooms and give them to the actors. The actors will return them to a designated place; they should never leave properties carelessly strewn about the dressing room.

If it is at all possible, there should be a property room where a stock of properties may be kept under lock and key. Properties which are bought or made can then be added to the stock from time to time.

> The property room in a theatre is full of the strangest things, and the property master is constantly being asked to work miracles

at short notice . . .

> Many things are made in the property room, and some property masters are extremely skilful at modelling articles in clay and casting them in papier mache, or making pieces of furniture. But most important of all they must be intensely adept in the art of faking. Fake is the watchword of "props."[1]

A production often calls for food, - edible or decorative. All food which does not actually play a part in the action is faked. Steak or chops may be cut out of a plank and painted with oil colors. Vegetables and fruits may be made from papier mache. Lettuce or undive is very effective made from green wax paper which can be curled. Boar's heads, fowls, or large cuts of meat may be shaped over a wire base and finished with papier mache. Plaster of Paris, covered with scene paint is a good substitute for candy. Youthful actors are usually pleased when a play calls for food to be eaten, but they are generally disappointed when they find that the food is not what it appears to be. Food must be easily handled and eaten. For this reason even the edible food is often faked. Apples may be cut and colored to represent almost any small article of food. Cake coloring is used for this purpose. For example, a papier mache turkey may be prepared so that one side has pieces of colored apple. Every dish should look appetizing to the audience.

> Bread, covered with hot water just before it is carried on to the stage, is a common device. The bread may be broken or cut to

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1. Zinkeisen, op. cit., p. 42.

> almost any desired shape from potatoes to meat, colored with vegetable dye, and made to steam with hot water. For stage soups, or drinks, a fine grain, like bird-seed, may be used. It, too, can be made to appear just off the stove by the use of boiling water. Real food and drink are usually unnecessary for a play. The actor had much better pretend to eat and drink than really to do so, unless he has to empty a glass. . . The property food should be used in as many rehearsals as possible.[1]

Every dish should look appetizing to the audience. Cookies and sandwiches should be small enough to be easily handled. Candy should never be sticky, gummy, or hard. Cups and glasses should never be filled to the top.

Devices for sound effects may be made or bought. Some of these devices may be very elaborate, some are surprisingly simple. Many books which deal with the technical phases of play production contain detailed instructions for the making and use of such devices. However, it is best to check on records containing sound effects before consuming time in the making of them. A large majority of sound effects have now been recorded and are available.

Visual effects are more easily created than might be expected, but some of them require construction of pieces which are not seen by the audience. Falling snow, for example, is usually dropped from a snow cradle. This is a perforated canvas hung from the flies which holds white confetti or cut paper. One side of the can-

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1. Smith, op. cit., pp. 332-333.

vas is pulled up and down by a rope.

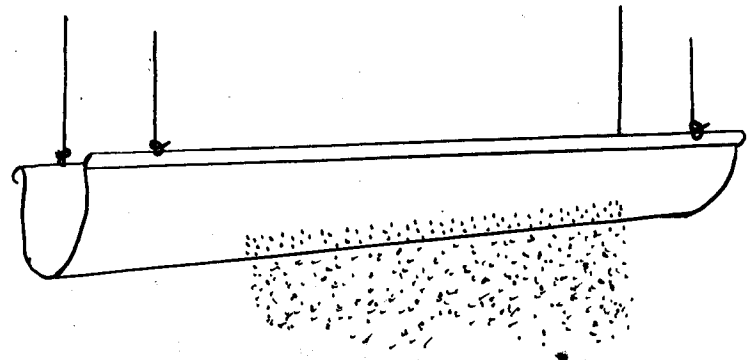

FIGURE 21. A SNOW CRADLE[1]

Ice cream salt, or white confetti may be used to represent snow on an actor's coat.

In the same way that visible snow is made to fall, rain may be effected. In this case however, rice is used instead of paper. It will be more effective if it falls into a tin trough, or if other means of sound accompany it.

Electric fans may be used to cause window curtains to flutter or blow into a room. Flags, sails of ships, paper, etc. may be made to flutter or blow in the same way.

The director does not always have use for complicated sound and visual effects. It is best for him and/or his property manager to consult the technical books when such effects are needed.

In buying properties, quantities should never be bought retail. The ten cent stores provide many needed articles, but the prices are deceptive when buying in large quantities. Pawn shops, cutlery shops, junk shops,

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1. Ibid., p. 335.

and second hand stores are often sources of unusual articles. Nothing should ever be bought new if it can be obtained second hand. Large furniture warehouses and second-hand stores are usually glad to rent furniture.

In buying drapery or other materials, bold or brillant patterns should be avoided. Solid colors are best wherever they can be used. The brightest colors should be placed closest to the centers of action in the scene, otherwise they may be distracting. Drapes should hang very full. It is best to buy double the amount of material and hang them double, - also to make deep hems, thus, the curtains hang well, and there is enough material to adjust it to later settings. Flowers may brighten a set, but small blossoms, bright in color, should be used. When buying artificial flowers, it is best to get wired stems. They can then be used for various pruposes, such as vines, buttonaires, corsages, etc. Small flower vases which might easily tip over should be weighted with sand.

When striking a set, the property crew immediately begins collecting small props, getting them off of walls and out of the way of the stage crew. Pictures, mirrors, and drapes are also taken down first for this reason. Property crews often use baskets for collecting the small properties. In this way, they can be handled more quickly and easily. All small props should be cleared by the time the scenery crew has finished striking the

flats, and as many of the large properties as possible should be moved to the front curtain line. Thus, when scenery is clear, the large properties may immediately be moved off stage.

As with other crews, the work does not end with the performance. After the show, the acting area of the stage must be swept, the properties must be sorted, labeled and stored. As soon as possible, all borrowed or rented articles must be returned.

CHAPTER XI

DESIGNING, MAKING, AND HANDLING THE COSTUMES

"Costumes are 'the scenery worn by the actors'."[1] They mark the time, the place, and the mood of the play to just as great a degree as do the scenery and the lines of the play. Therefore, the costumes should be another element of unity in the interpretation of the play as a whole. The audience may be distracted by glaring errors in costumes, whereas, the right costumes will allow them to concentrate on the words and action of the play.

The research committee must prepare for the designing of the costumes just as they prepared for the designing of the scenery. This committee may, if the director desires, be divided in two groups; one to work on scenery, and one to work on costumes. Some directors, however, prefer the same group to work on both, in order to obtain unity in the design of setting and costume. Much time is saved in using two groups, but they should work together closely, checking constantly as to the period of the play. Usually, students placed on this committee are interested in the art of designing. They will find the study of costuming fasinating, as

> . . . any well costumed amateur play means hours of real enjoyment and worth-while study over the fasinating books of historical costume and design in the libraries and the

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1. Smith, op. cit., p. 343.

> pictures in the galleries. In the books about former days and ways, in the pictures of old time people, one makes the oddest and most pleasant discoveries, one begins most charming acquaintances; one gets a store of quaint knowledge of the clothes, the fal-lals, the habits, tastes, and whims, of many ancient worthies and gallants all interesting, all picturesque.[1]

The research committee should, as soon as possible, turn books, sketches, costume plates, and references over to the designers, - or they may become the designing committee and proceed with the work. With the research material at hand, the costume designers set about designing the particular costumes for the particular play. Just as it is necessary for the research committees to work together, it is necessary for the designers of costumes and scenery to work together. First, the costume designers should know the purposes of costuming. Good costumes should be used as an aid in: 1. making the story clear and effective, 2. helping the actors in their interpretations of characters, 3. distinguishing characters on the stage, and 4. setting the mood of the play. "A costume should be thought of as a finished production as far as possible before it is committed to paper."[2] The designers cannot think of the costume in this way, however, until they have made a thorough study of the script. The first step in the designing of the costumes, then, is to read the script and take notes on

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1. Emerson Taylor, Practical Stage Directing for Amateurs, pp. 167-168. New York: E.P. Dutton and Co., Inc., 1916.

2. Zinkeisen, op. cit., p. 60.

the following points:

1. The period of the play, if it is historical.

2. The number of costumes which must be made.

3. The number of costumes which must be rented or borrowed.

4. The time of the play: the year; the time of year; the time of day.

5. The lapse of time between scenes.

6. The place of the setting: country; town.

8. The nature of the scene.

9. The manner in which the play is to be done: realistic; suggestive; stylistic.

10. The type of characters and the relation of one character to another.

11. The coloring and the style of the set.

12. The mood of the play.

If it is a period play, the research committee has discovered and made clear the general style of the period. They have also found references on the social-economical set-up of the country. They have made notes on the kinds of fabrics used in the period, - the colors, patterns, effects and characteristics of the cloth. They have also made rough sketches of the general silhouette of the costumes; of the types of decoration used; and of types of costumes which show variation in evidence of wealth.

With the study of the play and the research completed, the designers are ready to begin making rough sketches of the costumes. Milton Smith recommends making the first drawings very small and placing as many as possible on one sheet of paper. This, he says, gives the designer a working idea of the relation of the costumes, one to another.

> In fact, one of the best methods is to sketch all the costumes for the play on a single piece of paper, with the individual costumes not more than two inches in height. This makes it possible to judge the sum total of the entire set of costumes, and encourages the designer to work for large and simple effects. Such a plate of costumes is a key to the designer's scheme, and it might be called a costume-key.[1]

These sketches are drawn not only with the type of play, period, etc. in mind, but with the actor who is to wear the costume in mind, as well. All persons do not have beautiful figures, therefore, the sketch must suit the person who is to wear the finished production. It must be in proportion.

The first sketches are not necessarily finished drawings; the important thing is that they represent the desired line, - the silhouette of the costume. Details are not necessary. The sketches should be checked to see that there is not too much repetition of line among the various costumes. If the silhouettes of the costumes for two major characters who appear frequently together are too similar, some change should be made.

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1. Smith, op. cit., pp. 345-346.

but within keeping of the type of costume needed.

Color should then be added to the key sketches in order that it, too, may be studied before making the final costume plates. First, the hues, tints, and shades should be considered in relation to the scenery; second, in relation to the characters who are to wear the costumes, and third, in relation to the groupings of costumes.

Color is divided into two general classifications: cool, and warm. Cool colors are used for tragedy; warm colors are used for comedy. Warm colors are: red, orange, and yellow. Cool colors are blue green, green, and blue. Many connotations have grown up regarding colors, and they have thus become symbolic. Accordingly, the designer should be careful in choosing his colors for the psychological effect they may have on the audience.

Color should also be planned very carefully with the stage lighting in mind, as light can "illiminate," "bring out," or keep down" the colors of the costumes. "Color in costume is enhanced by the same color in light and is grayed or blackened by its complementary."[1] Samples of the colors should be tried out under the lights before final decisions are made. The effect of lighting on colors is too lengthy a study to be discussed here. The teacher-director should not only gain some knowledge of it himself, but he should teach the

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1. Hewitt, op. cit., p. 262.

fundamental principles to his students.

In planning the color scheme for the costumes, the designers should also keep in mind that ". . . the material and color of costume in the olden time was often regulated by law as well as by custom."[1]

Color first, and then line are the two most important elements in the designing of costumes. When the key sketches have been checked for unity in these elements, it is time to make the costume plates. Finished works of art are not necessary for the costume plates, but the figures should be in proportion. Students, especially those interested in art, will enjoy making them. Seven or eight inch figures are the best to use in designing costumes. The eight inch figure is easier to use when working out proportions. Figure 22. (p. 157) illustrates the proportions of the figure to be used for costume designing. The basic proportions for such a figure are as follows:

one inch = one head (top of head to chin)

one and one-half inches - from top of head to shoulder line

two inches from top of head to chest

three inches from top of head to waist

four inches from top of head to hips

five and one-half inches from top of head to heels

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1. Constance D'Arcy Mackay, Costumes and Scenery for Amateurs, p. 19. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1915.

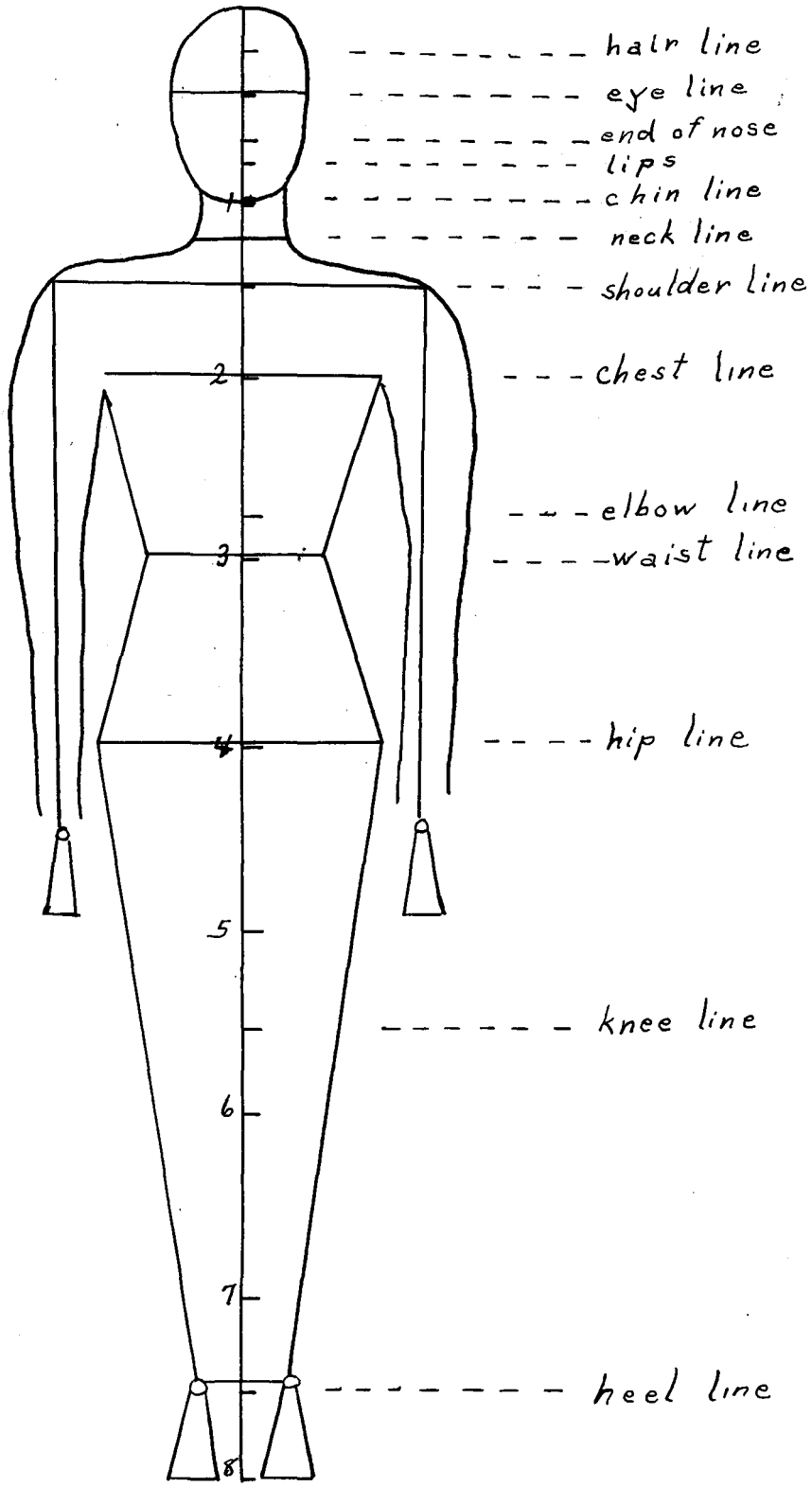

FIGURE 22. PROPORTIONS OF THE FIGURE FOR COSTUME DESIGNING

The arms should come just below the hip line. The forearm is three fourths the length of the upper arm. The hand is three fourths the length of the forearm. From arm pit to the end of the middle finger should be three heads. Leg proportions are the same as arm proportions. Other proportions are:

Width of head - three fourths of its length

Width of shoulders - two heads

Width of neck - one-half head

Width of chest - one and one-half heads

Width of waist - one head

Width of hips - one and one-half heads

Width of heels - one-half head

Width of upper arm - one-half head

In making the costume plates, the designers may use parts of the body from figure drawing books and put them together effectively. Fashion drawings may sometimes be used as a basic outline; advertising figures are also good for this purpose. A file of costume plates for all productions should be kept. They are valuable in selecting and determining the costumes whether they are borrowed, rented, or made. A finished costume plate is shown in Figure 23. (p. 159). This costume:

> . . . shows a woman's garment of the first half of the sixteenth century. About this time the level front line of the decolletage tends to arch slightly upwards. The corsage fits closely and the gown sleeves flair to a wide bell-mouth, and are turned back in a broad fold (often furlined . . .) at the elbow. The skirt is open in front in a V-shape

FIGURE 23. A COSTUME PLATE

over the petticoat and tends to hang in a funnel form.[1]

The finished costume plates are checked by the art director and the teacher-director. Then they are turned over to the costume manager and her crew. Using the plates as guides, the costume manager either cuts patterns for the costumes or buys patterns and makes the necessary adjustments. "Remember, however, that the bought tissue-paper pattern will not last long. All patterns including bought ones should be cut out of light weight carboard and numbered for safe keeping."[2] In a school where plays are produced frequently, stock patterns, as well as costumes will accumulate. The patterns should, of course, be kept in a systematic order so that they may be found immediately when needed.

Measurements should be taken of the actors, and the approximate lengths of material determined. The costume manager, or her crew members should then make the necessary purchases. The first shopping trip should be for samples and can easily be handled even by inexperienced crew members. When sufficient samples have been obtained they should be spread out on a large table. The crew members may move the pieces about trying various combinations of color and material. It is advisable to place a strong light over the table and place different

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1. Anne R. Chase, Costume Design, p. 38. New York: Bridgman Publishers, Inc., 1930.

2. Gassner and Barber, op. cit., p. 668.

colored gelatines[1] over it to test the effect of the lighting on the samples. If the costume manager and her crew stand back and look at the samples with eyes half shut, they will get the same effect that the audience gets. This is especially true of pattern fabrics. Very small patterns are not seen at all by the audience.

> The kind of materials used in the making of costumes for the stage is a vital factor in the appearance of the finished costume. The weave, the weight, and the surface of the cloth must be taken into consideration when a design is ready to be executed, in order that the costumes may express the period of the play, the social class and the dramatic situation of the character presented.
>
> In costuming for the theater, it is not necessary to use the actual material worn in the period, but it is necessary to give the effect of the correct material.
>
> . . . Poor people and peasants wore coarsely woven cloth. Royalty and powerful persons made their robes of rich, heavy material.[2]

Many materials would be prohibitive in price, and since the audience sits at a distance with the stage lighting changing considerably the appearance of the material, it is advisable to use substitutes. Of course, the general weave and character of the substitute material should be as similar as possible to the more expensive one. The important thing to remember is that the material, when draped, should fall into the same type of folds as the orginal material.

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1. Infra, P. 192, 213

2. Elizabeth B. Grimball and Rhea Wells, Costuming A Play, p. 27. New York: The Century Co., 1925.

Costumes may be used over and over if wide seams and additional hems are allowed for refitting. The seams of a new costume should be one inch. The costume should be basted, then the actor called in for the first fitting. It is then stitched, and if there is any doubt, the actor is called in for a second fitting. Trimmings and fastenings are then placed on the garment. It has already been stated that the main emphasis should be on the total effect. The costume is projected by color and line rather than by detail. Small details are not seen by the audience.

> In the decoration of a costume astonishing results may emerge from thought and invention and in many cases the best effects are produced through the use of materials that are quite peculiarly foreign to the purposes to which they are put. Designs may be embroidered, painted or applique on the groundwork, but the period must be preserved in all designs and patterns, however fantastic. Such trimmings that form part of the costume should imitate even to exaggeration those of the period; in fact, in most instances these trimmings are more effective and delightful when rather caricatured.
>
> Lace is a material that can be wonderfully improvised with a little ingenuity, and anyway, it is always difficult to get lace that is right in character. Take, as an instance, a cravat in the time of Charles II. I have seen a paper doily used to far greater advantage than any lace procurable; and His Majesty was able to have a new one for every performance! [1]

It is not necessary to finish costumes as street clothes are finished. They should, of course, be put together securely, but extremely small stitches and

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1. Zinkeisen, op. cit., p. 54.

finished seams may cause much valuable time to be wasted. Since the student is making a costume, she should be taught the difference in the making of it and in the making of a dress for her personal wardrobe.

Throughout the making of the costume procedure, it is best to have identification cards to accompany the costumes as a number of crew members may work on each costume, - each one sewing on some particular part. The costume manager should keep a duplicate of the identification card. Thus, she will be able to check on each costume as to color, accessories, character who is to wear it, crew members who are working on it, and the scene in which it is to be worn. When the costume is completed, it should be checked with this card and with the costume plate to be sure that nothing has been omitted. The director should then be asked to pass on the finished garments.

When the costume crew has completed the making of the costumes, it is time for them to be assigned their duties for rehearsals and for the final performance. Each crew member will be assigned an actor (or actors) for whose costumes he will be responsible. Pressing and keeping the costumes in repair are a part of the crew members' duties. The costume for each actor is labled with the character's name and the scene in which it is to be used. It is placed on a hanger, and all possible accessories are clipped to the costume with

spring clothes pins. It is then hung on a rack in the order of its use. The same costume rack may be used by several crew members; but it should not be too crowded, as costumes would become wrinkled, and confusion might also be caused. The shoes are placed under the costumes, and, if possible, any hats or head gear is placed on a shelf over the costumes. The crew members assist the actors to dress and to make quick changes. They are responsible for seeing that all parts of a costume are returned, pressed, mended and ready for the next rehearsal or performance.

As is true with all crews, duties do not cease with the final curtain. All costumes whether borrowed, rented, or owned should be repaired and cleaned. Costumes must be labelled and stored in clean, dry places. A card should be placed in the file index describing each costume and giving its location. Borrowed and rented costumes must be returned.

There are many important facts relating to the costuming of a production which the writer has had to omit. This information may be found in numerous books. Although the majority of these books do not deal with methods and procedures for secondary schools, the teacher of dramatics may use the general information to advantage.

CHAPTER XII

PLANNING, HANDLING, AND APPLYING THE MAKE-UP

Perhaps one of the greatest handicaps to a finished amateur production is the improper application of the make-up. This is the one phase of production which is most often neglected. " . . . the make-up for the part is seldom considered until the excitement and turmoil of the dress rehearsal."[1] No sawing, nailing, painting, cutting, or sewing are necessary in preparation; therefore, it is usually "put off" with the hope of getting to it before the dress rehearsal. In addition to the lack of time, there is usually a complete lack of knowledge. Whatever the cause, it will be to every director's advantage to check up and improve upon his system of make-up. Poor make-ups detract from otherwise good productions. No matter how excellent an actor's characterization may be, he cannot offset a make-up which gives him the opposite appearance of that character.

> A makeup, like a piece of sculpture or a painting, will never be better than the artist who creates it.
>
> It is true, of course, that not everyone can be a good makeup artist - just as not everyone will make a good actor or a good scene designer. Effective makeup requires a certain amount of artistic talent and a great deal of practical experience. There is little one can do to develop talent, but the practical experience is merely a matter of time spent in experimentation with techniques old

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1. Ivard Strauss, Paint, Powder and Make-up, Foreword. New Haven, Connecticut: Sweet & Son, Publishers, 1936.

and new - borrowed and original.[1]

If the director is a full time teacher of dramatics, he will include a unit on make-up in each of his dramatics classes. Since the students can learn the techniques of make-up only through experimentation and practice, they should be guided step by step through the process. This does not mean in theory alone, but also in activity. Whether it be a dramatics class or a make-up crew, a series of informal laboratory periods should be provided. Learning the art of make-up is a fascinating process, and when the fundamental techniques have been learned, much creative activity will take place.

> . . . every student of the drama should study and practice the art of make-up for his own pleasure. Indeed, in this particular day and age, every girl would do well to apply the fundamental principles to her daily appearance in order to spare the public the unnecessarily ludicrous and startling manifestations so often displayed.[2]

Amateurs often have the mistaken idea that stage make-up must be applied very heavily. The result is that the actors in many school plays appear to have dirty faces, or to be wearing masks. For this reason the technical rehearsal for both make-up crew and actors should be a must. The make-up of all characters should be tested under the actual lighting conditions of the performance, - the less light, the less make-up.

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1. Richard V. Corson, "Makeup - The Forgotten Art," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, Vol. XXVII (Dec. 1941) p. 585.

2. Ommarney, op. cit., p. 341.

> With the smaller theatres and more subdued lights of today very little make-up is needed except for character purposes. For straight part, unless the actor's face requires correction, only enough is needed to restore the natural hues and shadows under the lighting conditions of the particular scene. One director, asked by a young actress how much make-up to use for a certain part, replied: 'About half as much as you use on the street.' This advice would hold good for many parts, and for many young actresses.[1]

In preparing and planning for the make-up of characters, the actors and members of the make-up crew should look for pictures and for real life characters which might represent their stage characters. If they can find pictures from which to take suggestions during the actual make-up process, this is good. If no pictures are available, they must, at least, have a mental image of the character.

> The illustrated magazines of every type that are on the market today and have been in the past are veritable mines of illustrative material which a little patience and careful observation will enable every artist to convert into the handiest reference picture file at small cost; and which will probably never be available in a commercial form at any time.[2]

The manager of the make-up crew should call a meeting as soon as the organization for the production has been completed. He and his crew members should then discuss the characters in the play and build up general ideas of their appearance. Following this meeting, a week should be allowed for research. Then, a second

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1. Dolman, op. cit., p. 377.

2. Strauss, op. cit., p. 214.

meeting should be called. At this time the make-up crew will pool all of their findings, discuss the characterizations again, and endeavor to decide upon a definite make-up for the characters. If a third meeting of this type is necessary, the make-up manager will make arrangements for it. When decisions have been made, the manager should check on the needed materials and make an itemized list. This he will present to the director. Having received the director's O.K., he will present the itemized list to the business manager. If sufficient funds are available, the make-up manager then makes the necessary purchases. The next meeting of the make-up crew will be an organization meeting. Arrangements will be made for the procedure to be followed during laboratory periods, technical and dress rehearsals, and final performance. Definite duties will be assigned to each crew member. These duties will depend upon the procedure to be used. There are several methods: 1. each actor may apply his own make-up, with crew members ready to assist when called upon; 2. crew members may make-up the actors; 3. stations may be arranged with each crew member applying a certain part of the actor's make-up. If either of the first two methods is used, the make-up manager should appoint a definite place at the make-up table for each actor. At each place, there should be a card containing the actor's name, his character name, the character's age and type of make-up, and the crew member who is to make-up or assist the actor. There

should also be a folder containing any pictures which might be helpful. If the individual place is assigned to each actor, the crew members should have all necessary make-up articles laid out for the actor, or actors, whom they are to assist. If no make-up room with tables is available, mirrors may be placed in the chalk ledge of a class room and tablet arm chairs placed before the mirrors. When the crew members are assigned stations to which the actors rotate, only the make-up needed is placed at each station. A general make-up table is provided regardless of any method used. Thus, if an actor or crew member exhausts his supply, he may refurnish it quickly from the general supply table.

> Before a performance or dress rehearsal the make-up chairman should spread out paper towels upon which she places the make-up needed for that particular production in neat rows, with scissors, hairpins, baby-brush, mirrors, cleansing tissues or soft towels, paper stumps, at least two clean powder puffs or plenty of cotton pads, and the cold cream all at hand. Every effort must be made by actors and make-up people to avoid spilling powder, especially aluminum, and spirit gum on table or floor, and at the close of the performance every article should be carefully checked and replaced in its proper place in the make-up kit or drawer, and all soiled tissues and towels disposed of. The messiness accompanying class work or performances in which make-up is used by large groups is inexcusable, as is the carelessness with which the grease paints and powders are put away without tops on tubes and boxes, permitting spilling and drying out, with the added waste of expensive materials.[1]

The scope of this paper does not allow for lists of

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1. Ommanney, op. cit., p. 341.

make-up materials and instructions for applying the make-up. This would entail many pages of detailed discussion. There are a number of books available on the art of make-up which every teacher-director should study carefully. In the remainder of this chapter a few of the fundamentals of the art of make-up will be illustrated.

In order that one may apply make-up correctly, he must know the purposes for the use of it.

> The main purposes of make-up are six in number, namely, to combat lights, to stimulate projection, to obtain change, to simulate character, to intensify the dominating characteristics, and to promote a psychological effect.[1]

The size of the auditorium; the intensity of the form of lighting; and the proximity of the audience[2] must all be considered. If these cannot be checked accurately before the final performance, it is better to err on the side of too little rather than too much make-up. The actors and stage crew members should be trained in unity of technique.

> The make-up of the whole cast should be 'of a piece'; differences of colour and method should not appear where such differences are not wanted; there should be a unity of conception throughout.[3]

There are three types of make-up: 1. straight,

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1. John Baird, Make-Up, p. 5. New York: Samuel French, 1930.

2. Strauss, op. cit., p. 38.

3. Jeffreys and Stopford, op. cit., p. 151.

2. character, and 3. stylized. The writer has attempted to illustrate these three types by the following illustrations.

"Straight make-up is that make-up used by an actor to look like himself upon the stage, but to look his best from a distance under stage lighting."[1]

FIGURE 24.
WITHOUT MAKE-UP

FIGURE 25.
STRAIGHT MAKE -UP

1. Knapp, op. cit., p. 30.

Character Make-up is the make-up used by an actor to change his personal appearance so that to the audience he visually represents the character which he is playing.

Having firmly fixed in his mind's eye the Imagined Portrait of the part, the actor's next task is to reproduce the portrait upon his own face.[1]

FIGURE 26.
CHARACTER MAKE-UP
THE CLERGYMAN

FIGURE 27.
CHARACTER MAKE-UP
THE SKIPPER

1. Knapp, op. cit., p. 41.

Stylized Make-up is the make-up used to represent a stylized characterization.

It makes no pretense at reality but through tradition has become an accepted make-up for the part.[1]

FIGURE 28. STYLIZED MAKE-UP

Middle age and old age, when played by younger persons, are considered character make-ups. It is rather difficult to show maturity on the face of the adolescent. Yet, this must frequently be done for school plays.

The easiest way to suggest maturing age

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1. Knapp, op. cit., p. 65.

> at any period of life, aside from the creation of hollows in various parts of the features, is through the use of . . . artistically drawn natural wrinkle lines. The trouble is that most amateurs think of wrinkles being merely lines which are drawn upon the face. This is untrue. A wrinkle is not a line. In reality, it is a combination of highlights and lowlights which are carefully balanced and blended into each other and into the foundation coloring.[1]

The secret of good make-up is in the blending. In straight and character make-ups, all lines, colors, highlights and shadows should be blended. Only in the stylized make-up should anything appear as a patch on the face.

At middle age, character lines have become set. Therefore, the actor should have painted on his face the expression which has probably been on the face of the character most often, i.e. sadness, happiness, worry, etc. The lines, hollows, highlights and shadows caused by this expression should be emphasized. In old age, these lines are intensified, and other lines and hollows are added.

Figures 29, 30, 31 (p. 175) show the same face, with the basic lines for youth, maturity and old age. It is difficult to illustrate highlights and shadows by means of pen and ink. Only the basic lines can thus be shown. It must be remembered that for every line or shadow, there must a highlight. Highlights are made with a color of grease-paint which is lighter than the foundation.

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1. Strauss, op. cit., p. 123.

CHAPTER XIII

LIGHTING THE PRODUCTION

The actors are prepared; the scenery is made; the properties are collected; the costumes are ready; the make-up is applied. One more element, lighting, blends all the others into an artistic whole.

> Forever discard any idea that a scene or play is "lit." The lighting is as fundamental a part of the expression of the scene as the lines themselves.
>
> The director as interpreter of this great orchestration of scenery, light, and poetry must be familiar with light as a palette for the painting of his picture and he must of necessity have some knowledge of the working of light itself. For the student the many books on the subject will open great vistas of opportunity if he will but go to them.[1]

The work of the lighting director and his crew is both physical and aesthetic. First, they must decide what lighting equipment they will use, where they will place it, and how they will make it safe. Second, they must decide <u>how</u> to use the light in order to <u>act</u> the play. Because stage lighting requires a knowledge of physics, an understanding of color in light and pigment, and a reasonable amount of adequate equipment, it is usually the most neglected of all the elements in producing a school play. With a better understanding of the place of dramatics in the school, will come better stage equipment. With the adequate and proper tools, will come an incentive to learn and apply the principles

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1. Crump, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 80.

of stage lighting. To illuminate the stage is actually only one purpose of stage lighting. It does much more than this. Properly used, it fuses all the parts of the play. The functions of lighting are stated briefly by Hewitt as follows:

> Light is necessary to make visible the actor and the setting so that they can give visual expression to the written play. However, light can do much more than merely illuminate in this elementary sense. It can be used to help focus audience attention and shift it from one area to another; it can help present the physical scene of the action by imitating light effects in nature; it can give increased plasticity to actor and setting; it can form a part of the decorative pattern of the setting; it can help suggest the passage of time by its changes within or between scenes. Last, but by no means least, light can suggest the mood or atmosphere of the play and can, through its changes, symbolize the action of the play.[1]

The primary function of stage lighting is to make the actors visable to the audience. Experimentation in lighting for effects can become so interesting that the actors are sometimes forgotten. Therefore, the director should not forget that the audience has come to "see" the play.

Realistic effects in lighting add to the interest of the audience. Light, in this sense, is used to simulate conditions, such as: the time of day; the time of night; the weather; the place; the light from a lamp or a window; the firelight; etc.

Light can be used as a painter uses his brush to

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1. Hewitt, op. cit., p. 231.

enhance the pigments in composition and design.

> To-day, when lighting is more and more coming to take the place of scenery, it is impossible to consider stage-settings apart from stage-lighting; and the more the designer can combine scenery and lighting in his mind the better results he is likely to obtain. In truth, scenery does not exist unless it is illuminated, and the impression it creates is entirely altered by a change in the quality or direction of the light.[1]

Light may also bring out the nature of objects of three dimensional surfaces. It reinforces or enhances the picture so that the painted shadow is no longer needed. Therefore, the director also uses light as a sculptor uses a chisel.

> In lighting an actor we bear in mind that he is a three dimensional form which should be lighted not only from the front but also from both sides.[2]

Mood and feeling are created or sustained by the psychological use of lighting. Such lighting is produced by color modification and by the control of light, that is, brightness or intensity. The director may work and play upon the psychological mood of the spectators by a careful manipulation of the lights.

Irving Pichel, a writer, an actor, and a director, in summarizing the functions of stage lighting, says;

> In it [lighting] we have the only single agency in the theater that can work with all the other agencies binding them together - that can reveal with the dramatist, paint with the designer, and act with the actors.[3]

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1. Jeffreys and Stopford, op. cit., p. 70.

2. Davis, op. cit., p. 188.

3. Irving Pichel, Modern Theaters, p. 69. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1925.

There is no one fixed method of lighting. The method to use, is the one that works. One should start with a point of departure and go on with what suits the particular need.

> In the school theatre, every effort should be made to use effectively whatever equipment is available, and to induce authorities to install flexible modern equipment to replace the old-fashioned borders and strips, probably firmly fixed in immovable positions.[1]

When the director, art director, and designers have made definite plans as to the design and coloring of settings and costumes, the lighting manager can begin his work. Familiarity with the script is, of course, a prerequisite. From this reading, and a consultation with the director, he will determine whether the play is to be predominantly lighted with cool colors or with warm colors. (Cool colors are usually used for tragedies; warm colors are used for comedy and farce.) The lighting manager should then examine the scenery and costume plates. From these, he will determine the pigments on which his lights are to play.

> . . .consideration of the effect of light on color should never be overlooked. Color in fabric is enriched by the same color in light and is dulled by its complementary.[2]

With knowledge of the equipment he has at hand, the mood of the play, and the color pigments to be used, the lighting manager begins his general plans. He makes a

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1. Ommanney, op. cit., pp. 322-323.

2. Hewitt, op. cit., p. 240.

light plot, showing where all lighting equipment will be placed and the colors to be used. The director, art director and lighting manager, should then go over these plans together, making sure that all parts of the production are in harmony. After this meeting, the manager makes any necessary changes in his light plot and then calls his crew together. They discuss the play in general and the lighting in detail. Each crew member is given specific duties. They prepare to carry out these duties at the technical rehearsals. During these rehearsals, they make all light shifts for every scene, running through the sequence of changes. Thus, they are prepared for the first dress rehearsal. The director, art director and other crew managers should be present at the technical lighting rehearsal to suggest changes, and to point out any defect in the lighting as planned. No matter how carefully the lighting has been planned, there will probably be changes during dress rehearsal, - when the lights, settings, and costumes are combined. This is to be expected, but the changes will be of a minimum, and therefore, will not wear the patience of all concerned to an unbearable degree.

The equipment with which the lighting crew works consists of three fundamentally different kinds of lighting units: strip lights, spot lights, and flood lights. Smith designates these as follows:

> 1. Strip Lights. . . . a series of bulbs . . . arranged alongside of one another in a

> long, narrow row, or strip, so that they work as a unit. . . . Usually each unit is backed by a metal reflector, often painted white, . . . Such lights vary greatly in size.
>
> 2. Spot Lights. The second common variety of lighting unit is the spot light, which has two essential features: a concave mirror behind the bulb to collect and reflect the light rays, and a condenser lens in front of the bulb to concentrate them. A spot light thus throws a spot of strong, concentrated light over a small area.
>
> 3. Flood Lights. The third and final variety of unit is the flood light, which as the name implies, floods a wide area. All floods are individual bulbs in a housing with an open front. The housing may be square or round, large or small. It may hang from a pipe overhead or be supported by a standard from the floor.[1]

The director should learn to use his equipment, skilfully, - no matter how "little" or how "poor" it may be. He will find many students who will, in turn, be eager to receive training from him.

The three fundamental kinds of lighting units have only been mentioned. This paper does not allow for a detailed discussion of equipment or of the physics of light. The fundamental uses for these lighting units are given below.

There are six major classifications of the newer type of lighting: 1. acting area lighting; 2. blending lighting; 3. tonal lighting; 4. background lighting; 5. effect lighting, and 6. motivating lighting.

Acting Area Lighting is the most important classification of lighting. It restricts the light to the

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1. Smith, op. cit., pp. 385-386.

acting area itself, as much as possible. The light is kept off of the rest of the stage, but it includes everything in the acting area. Acting area lighting breaks down the total acting area into smaller areas and deals with each one individually. The only means for this type of lighting is the spot light. There must be at least one spot light for each acting area into which the complete area is broken. If the spot light is placed so that the beam is straight ahead, there will be no shadows at all. If it is placed above or below this point, but still in front, there will be heavy shadows in the wrong direction. This will give an unnatural effect. The proper place for the spot light is at an angle of about 45 from the front and overhead. The 45 overhead angle provides light and shadow, but the shadows are downward. In order to break up the rather flat shadow, the light should be applied from two sides. This is done by putting spot lights on either side at a 45 angle.

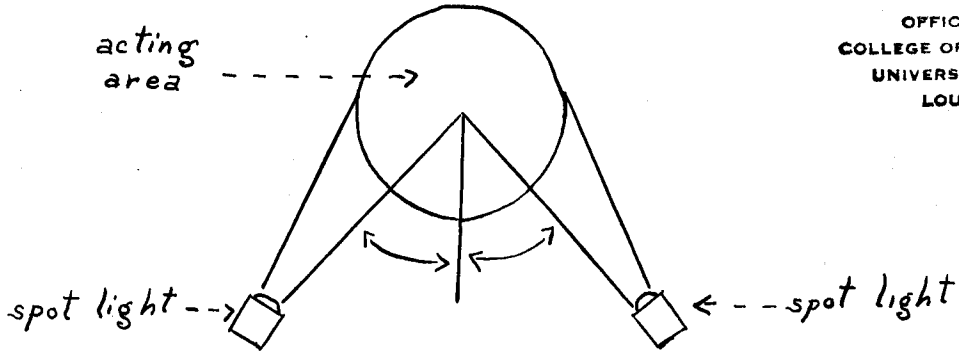

FIGURE 32. FOCUSING SPOT LIGHTS AT A 45 ANGLE

In lighting the acting area, the cross spotting should cross <u>at</u> the area.

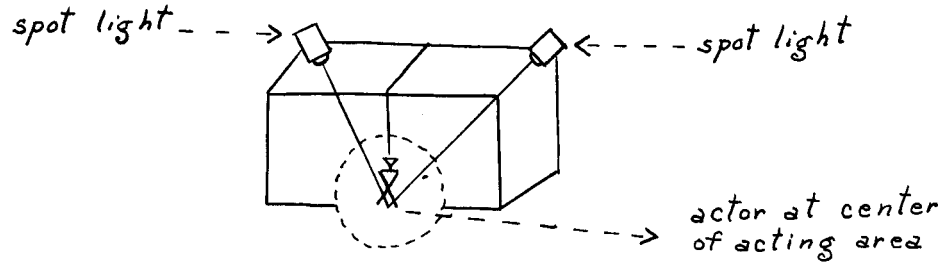

FIGURE 33. CROSSING THE LIGHT AT THE ACTING AREA

Crossing spotlights washes out all but the downward shadows unless complementary tints are used. The colors reinforce each other.

> If complementary tints are used, they will produce approximately white highlights where they mix, but each will produce highlights of its own and shadows of its own which are somewhat different in color.[1]

Setting up acting areas depends on the size of the stage; the deeper or wider the stage, the more additional areas are required.

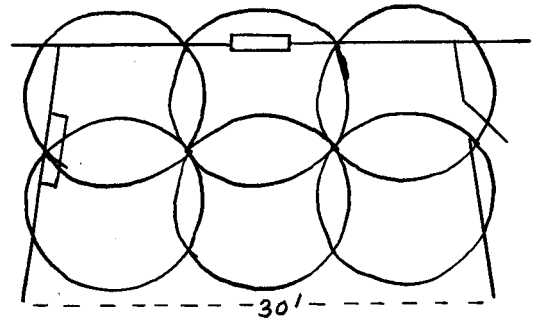

FIGURE 34. ACTING AREAS OF A STAGE

The lighting depends on the contour and setting of the stage and on the number of spot lights available.

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1. Hewitt, <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 236-237.

However, acting area lighting must be unified. This is done by placing warm and cool colors on the same sides consistently. Otherwise, an actor passing from one area to another receives a peculiar wrench which distracts the audience.

An entrance or doorway may not be included in the general areas set up for the play. This would be a weak point of lighting. Therefore, one must deviate by a supplementary light, if he wants the actor to be visible before, and as he enters the setting. The supplementary light should be directed straight into the entrance which is not lighted. This is called emphatic spot lighting, or single spotting, or half area spotting.

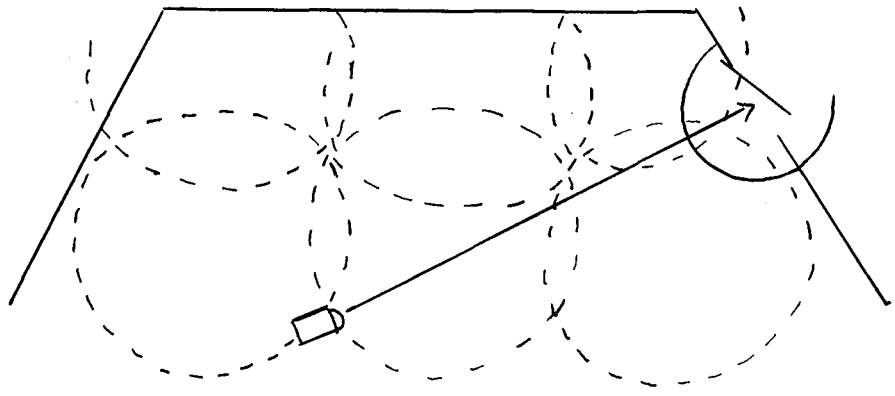

FIGURE 35. EMPHATIC SPOT LIGHTING OF AN ENTRANCE

Blending Lighting is a low intensity of light flooded over the acting area in tints which will serve to blend the other lighting. An actor passing from one acting area to another must show no sudden transition of light. Spot lights are soft-edged[1] so that overlapping

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1. Infra, p. 215.

causes practically the same amount of light as occurs at the center. Border lights are used at a low intensity. The blending border adds practically no light to the acting area. The three color primaries of light should be used in blending. For example, use one circuit of red lights, one circuit of green lights, and one circuit of deep blue lights. Almost any tint or color may be achieved if these three colors are used in the blending borders. The director should experiment in order to get the tint he desires and to avoid washing out the colors altogether.

Tonal Lighting is applied primarily for bringing out the color values in the setting. It gives color and life to the pigment on the scenery. Acting area lighting does not light the setting intentionally although a small amount of it spills on the lower part of the setting. Tonal lighting is accomplished by a large wide flood light which can reach not only the acting areas but also the scenery. To help pick up the color values and pigments on the setting, a light of a very deep, rather pure hue is applied. The color used depends upon the predominant color values of the setting. For example deep green should be used for an exterior set in which much green foliage is used. Since the tonal lights are deep in color, they do not give very much light. Neither is a high wattage used. The color from the tonal lighting which reaches the acting areas is washed out, but this is not true of other areas which are not lighted by the

spots and borders. It brings out these areas and gives them a tonal quality. Flood lights mounted in the teaser[1] row are used for tonal lighting.

Background Lighting is applied independently with separate instruments. It is used on cycloramas[2], backings[3] for entrances, ground rows[4], sky backings outside windows, etc. The cyclorama is the largest background an audience sees and therefore should be carefully lighted. For the flat type of cyclorama, the open box flood lights may be used.

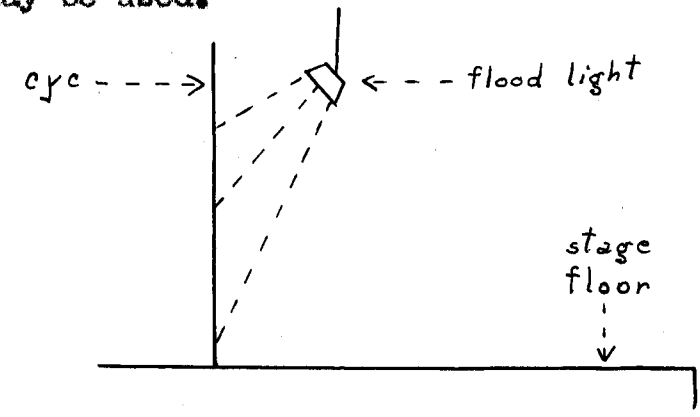

FIGURE 36. BACKGROUND LIGHTING ON A SKY CYCLORAMA

In lighting the cyclorama, if the manager is limited to simple equipment, he should establish the color needed for the scene and equip the floods with that color. With simple equipment, the color cannot be changed - only the intensity of the light. If two sets of floods can be used, the director may change from light blue to

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1. Infra, p. 215.
2. Infra, p. 212.
3. Infra, p. 211.
4. Infra, p. 214.

dark blue.

Ground rows (pieces of scenery used to mask off the bottom of the cyc) should give distance to the setting. A strip light may be placed on the stage floor, in front and at the base of the ground rows. It should be placed carefully, so that the source is not obvious. The tint of light should favor the pigment on the ground row. A better method of lighting ground rows is by the use of spots mounted on floor standards. These spots are masked by wood wings[1] and other scenery.

For purposes of lighting backings or doorways, short strip lights are mounted vertically. They hang on the battens of the scenery and are called entrance striplights as they are used behind doorways. They should be kept at a very low intensity as only a touch of light is needed. The color depends on the backing. More wattage should be used for window backings than for doorways.

Effect Lighting is used entirely apart from the lighting of the setting because it is wholly for effect. Lighting for realistic effects is an assimulation or suggestion of the lighting in real life. Lighting for pictorial effects is wholly for the purpose of decoration. Methods used for effect lighting are too numerous to mention here. Some of the effects which may be obtained are moonlight, natural daylight, dawn, sunset, leaf shadows, fog, mist, clouds, snow, rain, lightning, fire, etc.

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1. 216.

Motivating Lighting is secured by lighting an obvious source of light on the stage. The sources of light on the stage motivate some types of effect lighting. For example: electric lamps, oil lamps, torches, candles, grate fires, camp fires, etc. In other words, these properties on the stage seem to be the source of light, but actually the light source is off stage or is cleverly hidden by scenery or properties.

The intensity or brightness of each of the six major classifications of lighting is controlled by dimmers. These are mounted on the switchboard. Stage lighting is controlled by attaching all of the lighting apparatus to switches on a control board, - more often called the switchboard. The majority of the newer schools, built with auditoriums, have switchboards on the stage. Portable switchboards may also be obtained. "The switchboard is the heart of the lighting system,"[1] because it is the combination of fuses, switches, and dimmers which control all the circuits. Thus, one person can handle all the light changes during a scene from the control board.

> Each color unit and each location should have a separate dimming control. For example, it should be possible to dim all the red lights in the first border, or all the red lights in the foots, and it should be possible to dim each border separately.[2]

Dimming and increasing the intensity of light during a

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1. Dolman, op. cit., p. 334.

2. Merrill and Fleming, op. cit., p. 198.

scene must be handled skilfully. Day does not break suddenly, - nor does the sun drop in a moment at sunset. The light on stage should assimulate as nearly as possible the gradual change in nature. The audience is distracted by sudden changes of light unless there is a reason, such as a fire suddenly blazing up. Therefore, the switchboard operator should practice moving the dimmers very slowly, - or very quickly, and on time with the cue.

All electrical work on the stage should be done with high regard to the safety element. Rules and regulations regarding this work are embodied in the National Electrical Code which is gotten out by Insurance Companies. There is a special section in this book on theatres. In asking for it, one should request the latest copy. "Students should always investigate the local laws governing all lighting used on the stage . ."[1]

The study of color in stage lighting is not only fasinating but almost inexhaustive. Therefore, little can be said about it in this paper. The first principle for the lighting crew to learn is that colored light is not white light with color added to it. White light is light made up of an equal quantity of all the spectral hues. To obtain color, one begins with a clear light and strikes out or subtracts certain components and reviews the remainder. This is called selective absorption.

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1. Ommanney, op. cit., p. 325.

Thus, if green light is desired, the violet, blue, blue-green, orange, and red are absorbed. Color primaries represent the smallest number of colors by means of which all other colors are secured. The three color primaries in light are: blue, green, and red. The secondaries in light are yellow, purple, and blue-green.

An explanation of the many principles involved in securing color with light, and in the effects of light on pigments might easily fill a book. Therefore, only a simple color chart will be given here from which a lighting manager and his crew might begin their experiments in the color of stage lighting. This light color chart is shown in Figure 37. (p. 191). In order that the color chart may be better understood, one example is given below. Supposing that a lighting manager is trying to get the best lighting effect on a blue costume (pigment). Following the chart, he would find that his light medium should be blue, blue-green, or purple, - unless he wants black. Varying tints would be obtained depending on the hue and saturation used in light. Blue is a very difficult pigment to light. "All colors change their intensity under different lights, taking on varying tints which often clash on the stage although they blend in daylight."[1] All colored pigments are brightest when the same color in light is thrown upon them. Complementary colors grey the pigment.

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1. Ibid., p. 329.

THE LIGHT COLOR CHART

Light

Pigments	Red	Blue	Green	Yellow	Blue Green	Purple
Green	Black	Black	Green	Green	Green	Black
Blue	Black	Blue	Black	Black	Blue	Blue
Yellow	Red	Black	Green	Yellow	Green	Red
Red	Red	Black	Black	Red	Black	Red
Purple	Red	Blue	Black	Red	Blue	Purple
Blue Green	Black	Blue	Green	Green	Blue Green	Blue

FIGURE 37. THE LIGHT COLOR CHART

This chart does not allow for any variations. It assumes a pure hue with 100% saturation for all the colors. The chart gives the basis for understanding what happens when colored light is thrown on colored pigment.

The color media used in stage lighting are glass, gelatin, and cellophane. Gelatin is the most useful external filter because it is obtainable in a wide range of colors. "Gelatin is poured in very thin sheets, mixed with color dye, and when a piece of this is put in front of a light source, it acts as a filter cutting out all other spectrum colors except its own value."[2] Special frames are made in which to place the gelatins.

"Light is the most dramatic medium of expression that the stage manager has at his command." Students should be encouraged to study photographs and good pictures which illustrate the principles of lighting; to read; and to experiment with the fundamental elements.

The work of the lighting crew during rehearsals and performance is the placing and connecting of equipment. All plans have been made prior to this time, and each crew member is responsible for certain instruments. For example, one crew member might shift and connect all floor lamps, table lamps, etc. which are a part of the setting. Another crew member might have charge of all spotlights, and another have charge of border lights and flood lights. Usually, however, the specific duties do not follow such a general classification. The light manager can best work out the duties for each specific play. He is usually in charge of the switchboard, although he may have assistants.

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1. Gassner and Barber, op. cit., p. 364.

2. Crump, op. cit., p. 215.

CHAPTER XIV

THE FINAL PERFORMANCE

At the end of the last dress rehearsal, the director's duties have been fulfilled. It is sometimes difficult for a teacher-director to realize this, especially if he is the type of teacher who has always felt that he must supervise the students at every moment. The teacher who has had experience in teaching through the media of various activities will more readily see the point, and be ready to trust the students to perform the duties for which they have prepared. The place for the director during the performance is in the auditorium, preferably on the last row.

> Do not adopt the attitude that "because they are high school youngsters, we cannot expect them to do things the right way." There is no excuse for "ham" tactics in high school productions. A director can get from his people just what he expects to get. Try to realize that high school students have possibilities as well as limitations. They enjoy running their shows with as professional a touch as possible.[1]

The stage manager is in charge during the final performance; the crew members have their specific duties to perform; and the actors have assumed the characters of the parts they are to play. The business manager, and the house manager have also prepared their crew members, and they are ready to sell tickets, take tickets, and usher the people to their seats. All this is true if

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1. F.L. Winship, Dramatics Clubs, p. 17. Boston: Walter H. Baker Company, 1939.

the director has planned, organized, and directed properly and carefully from the beginning. This being true, there is no need for the feeling that he should be on stage "just in case." If the reader has followed the sequence of production through the chapters of this paper, he has gained a general idea of the many activities which go into the making of the whole, and he can understand that each actor, each crew manager, and each crew member is ready to perform his part without further assistance.

Perhaps there are a few points which the writer has not previously mentioned which should be considered here. Some things must necessarily be left unsaid, but these things are vital to a good performance. If the students who are participating in any part of the production are members of dramatics classes, or if they have participated in previous productions, they will have built up a "feeling" for the "right" things to do. That is, if the director has guided and created, or inspired this feeling in them. Throughout the weeks of rehearsal and preparation, the director should, as often as possible, give the students bits of information concerning those things which make a performance appear professional. During the period of dress rehearsals, he should call the entire group together to make sure that these points have "taken." First, he should help the cast to understand how ridiculous and unprofessional it is to have a

person in costume and make-up appear in the auditorium before, during, or after performance. Unless adolescents are guided carefully in this matter, some of them will be likely to err. Therefore, they should be shown that it is a sure way to ruin the characterization that they have worked on so hard for a period of weeks. A comparison with the professional performance will usually clinch the point. Second, in point of emphasis, should be the bad taste of curtain peeping. Of course, if the actors are co-operating in the plan of organization, they are not on stage, but in the dressing rooms or green rooms. However, a crew member may be tempted to pull the curtain back, "just a little" to look for Mother or Dad. Soon he has the whole crew following his example, and the curtain is pulled far more than a "little." "Curtain peeping is a sure sign of a non-professional attitude."[1]

Actors and crew members alike should be convinced that they will ruin their performance if they stand too close to the edge of curtain or scenery and look into the auditorium after the curtain rises. They should be taught that if they can see the audience, the audience can see them. It takes self discipline for the adolescent to remain far enough back stage to remain unseen until his entrance cue. He wants to "see the show," too, and it is not possible to do so if he is too far away

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1. Ibid., p. 16.

from an entrance. However, once the students have caught the spirit, they take pride in doing things right.

The third point to which the director refers, is "talking and unnecessary back stage noise." The director may encourage the sucking of lemons as a means to keep actors quiet before the performance, but it is much better, as in the other two points mentioned above, to encourage the attitude of the professional. The ushers should also be reminded that it is a part of their duty to keep quiet in the auditorium. They should not only be quiet themselves, but they should endeavor to sustain quiet on the part of the spectators.

The director should also remind the actors about chewing gum. By the time the final performance has been reached, they should have the right attitude in this matter. However, the tension, caused by waiting for the final minute, may bring out an habitual custom, even though the actor performs the act unconsciously. Therefore, it is wise to impress the fact, "absolutely no gum," once more upon their minds.

There will be other points regarding the particular play which the director will want to point out to actors and crew members before the final performance. While it is best that all of these matters be discussed several days before the performance, it is sometimes wise for the director to meet with the group shortly before the performance. At this meeting, he may review these points

quickly and give any necessary announcements. The main reason for the meeting however, should be that he give them a feeling of assurance.

> It is important for him to be poised and encouraging in his attitude, for his state of mind will be reflected in the actions of the cast. . . . he will make them feel that he believes in them and expects the very best they have to give.[1]

No matter how nervous the director may be, he should be cheerful and "appear" calm to the students. If he cannot do so, he should not see them at all.

It was stated at the beginning of the chapter that the director's place is in the auditorium during the performance. Nothing was said, however, about that important time "just before" the performance. During the hour before, it is well for the director to be seen back stage, in dressing rooms, make-up room, and green rooms. That is, if he can be calm and reassuring as stated above. This gives the group the feeling that he is with them one hundred percent. Of course, they should know long before the performance that he will sit in the auditorium to see it. With this information well established in advance, they do not feel that he has deserted them at the last minute.

The orchestra leader and stage manager should have a definite understanding as to cues worked out long before the performance. At a given time, perhaps ten or fifteen minutes before the time set for opening, the

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1. Ommanney, op. cit., p. 296.

orchestra should be ready. Unless there is some obvious reason that the performance will not begin on time, the stage or lighting manager should give the orchestra the cue to begin.

> The best signal for the orchestra to cease playing, as the curtain is ready to be raised, is wink the lights on the music stands, dim the lights in the auditorium, and switch on the footlights, in this order. The use of a bell as a signal for the curtain to be raised is now out of fashion. The signals with the lights are less obtrusive but equally emphatic, and are therefore to be preferred.[1]

Of course, it is not possible to wink lights on music stands or to dim auditorium lights in all schools, but satisfactory unobtrusive cues can be arranged. However, if auditorium lights can be dimmed, a second advantage is given. This is in regard to the audience. The few moments during the dimming process allows time for people to settle down and turn their attention to the stage. Thus, there is less likely to be unnecessary noise during the first lines of the play.

The play should start on time. Promptness will pay dividends not only on the performance being given at the time but on later performances. The audience will be in a more receptive mood if the curtains open at the scheduled time, and they will learn to come on time if promptness is made a habit.

Visitors should not be allowed back stage either before or during the performance. The director should

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1. Taylor, op. cit., p. 186.

make this a hard and fast rule as they can hinder the work of the stage crew to a great extent. If they must come, let it be after the performance.

One last word as to the teacher-director as he sits in the auditorium to watch the results of the work he has directed. He will take notes! Whether there is to be a second performance or not, this should be true. If there is another performance, he will want to make note of anything which can be improved. If not, he will want to discuss certain points with those students with whom he will be working in dramatic classes. Lastly, he will want these notes for his own good, for the good director is humble; he knows there is room for improvement. These notes should cover anything and everything from a forgotten property to audience reaction. The latter will be helpful in future choice of plays.

If there are two performances the director should not be too complimentary after the first one. Too many compliments often give actors and crew members too much confidence and the second performance shows a let down. This does not mean that the director should be discouraging, but he should give them something to work on as a stimulus.

As to compliments, the director, himself, should not pay too much attention to all the nice things which are said to him. They will be said regardless of whether the performance is good, bad, or indifferent. If he

could "lose himself in the crowd," he would hear the things which would probably come nearer to being the truth. However, he will have to go back stage, and should do so a minute before the last curtain, in order t to avoid the crowd.

> When the stage of the school really functions, it can produce final performances which rival professional ones because the rehearsals have been distinctly educational in the finest sense of the work. . . . Under the inspired guidance of a real teacher-director, the high school production can achieve a reality and sincerity which lifts it into a spiritual and aesthetic experience for actors, crew, and the audience, which is perhaps the highest form of theatrical entertainment! That more school plays do not reach this ideal is due to low standards, poor management, and uninspired direction, for the young people themselves will rise to whatever heights are set before them.[1]

> There is no greater pleasure than participating in a successful dramatic production. If you have had a share in any capacity in the staging of a play, you will ever afterward enjoy the drama with a keener appreciation of the effort that lies back of its conception, preparation, and production.[2]

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1. Ommanney, op. cit., pp. 297-298.

2. Ibid., p. 297.

CHAPTER XV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

1. The educational use of dramatics in the school provides activities which meet the needs of the child.

2. The production of a play is the core from which many activities are generated.

3. The activities and experiences provided by dramatics include individual problems, small-group problems, and whole-group problems.

4. The teacher of dramatics should be a wholesome, versatile person who has had special training in the field of dramatics.

5. The teacher-director should be a full time dramatics teacher. A teacher of other subjects has neither the time nor the energy to do efficient and successful teaching in dramatics, and usually he is not trained to do so.

6. The teacher-director should be the generalissimo of the organization of a production staff.

7. Organization for the production of a play provides a systematic order for democratic participation in many activities. Thus, it is a means of avoiding confusion and waste of time.

8. Each of the production groups: scenery, properties, costuming, make-up, lighting, business, publicity, and house, - should be headed by a crew manager.

9. The crew members should work for the good of the whole, and at the same time perform specific, individual duties.

10. The play should be selected with careful study. Thought should be given to the adolescents who are to participate; the audience which is to be entertained; and the physical conditions under which the play must be produces.

11. The script of the play must be prepared by the director before casting, rehearsing, or production work is begun. He should determine the type, theme, and treatment of the play; analyse the characters; diagram the action; and provide copies for actors and crew managers.

12. The try-out method of casting a play is most generally used. Try-out procedures vary according to the teacher-director and the group with which he is concerned.

13. Rehearsal schedules should be carefully planned with a consideration of the following points: the time element; the number of rehearsals; and the type of rehearsals.

14. There are many types of rehearsals. Each element of producing a play should be discussed and rehearsed separately before blending the whole performance.

15. Research should be done on settings, costumes, and properties in order that they be authentic as to the period in which the play is placed.

16. Designing committees should plan the line and color of settings and costumes. They should make working drawings and costume plates for the scenery and costume crews.

17. The stage manager and his crew should construct and paint the scenery according to the designs made by the scenery designers.

18. The costume manager and her crew should choose materials and make the costumes according to the designs of the costume designers.

19. Stage crews should learn the different types of scenery and its uses. They should also learn to handle scenery in a systematic way.

20. Costume crews should learn the difference in making costumes and street clothes; the effect of light on colored material; and the economy of choosing materials.

21. The property crew collects, distributes, and handles all articles which are not classified as scenery or costumes. They follow an organized, systematic scheme of handling the properties.

22. The make-up crew plans, handles and applies all make-up. They should have some knowledge of the types of make-up, and some practice in the technique of make-up.

23. The lighting manager must plan to light the production in harmony with all scenery, properties, costumes and make-up.

24. The lighting manager and his crew must have some

knowledge of electricity, stage-lighting equipment, and the effect of light on color pigments.

25. All crew managers should work in close harmony, consulting and advising each other. They should attempt, as far as possible, to carry out the ideas and plans of the director, yet each may experiment to a wide degree in his own element of the production.

26. All crew members co-operate in small groups, later combining their efforts with the whole group; yet each individual has specific duties to perform.

27. The final performance should appear as professional as possible.

28. Students should be allowed to accept the responsibility of the performance without supervision of the director.

29. The director should take notes from the rear of the auditorium during the performance.

30. The teacher-director should study the results of his directing and strive to improve.

Conclusions

Play production is an artistic fusion of a wide range of skills, talents, and activities. It is a democratic means of meeting the needs of the child and should, therefore, have a place in the curriculum of the school. Educators and administrators, in general, do not have a clear picture of the values of dramatics, because they have not participated or had training in the field.

Therefore, teachers with pleasing personalities who have a natural instinct for the dramatic, who are artistic, and who understand the adolescent child should be encouraged to study the teaching of dramatics. The school should provide the means whereby teachers may help children to engage in rich dramatic experiences which are instinctive to every child. Dramatics is one of the most educational means of expression and should be utilized.

This paper does not presuppose any previous knowledge or experience in play production on the part of the reader. It has been the purpose of the writer to present a few of the values of and fundamental problems in producing a play. The paper has been treated as a handbook which introduces the steps of play production in their proper sequence. The writer has had in mind, those progressive teachers who want to know the intrinsic values of dramatics; those teachers who have had play production thrust upon them; and those teachers who wish to do a good job, better.

The writer does not presume that there is a lack of material to which teachers may turn for such information. Many books have been written on all phases of play production, but comparatively few have been written from the viewpoint of the teacher-director in the school. Therefore, an over-all picture has been given from the viewpoint of the teacher-director. There is a need for other writers to give an over-all picture from the

viewpoint of the student, and for still others to treat each phase of play production in detail from the viewpoint of both teacher and student.

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APPENDICES

GLOSSARY OF STAGE TERMS

Acts: Divisions of the play in natural order.

Act Curtains: The curtains at front of the stage which divide the auditorium from the stage and are used between acts.

Acting Area: The specific section of the stage on which the players are acting.

Ad lib: To make up lines, extemporaneously, during a scene, especially when an emergency arises.

Amateur: A person who does theatre work without pay.

Amber: A soft, yellow light, usually used to represent sunlight.

Angle Set: A stage setting placed at an angle which is not parallel to the footlights.

Apron: That portion of the stage which extends beyond the act curtain and protrudes into the auditorium.

Arch Flat: A flat piece of scenery built with an archway.

Area, acting: That part of the stage which is visable to the audience and is used for acting.

Asbestos: A fireproof curtain which is hung in front of the act curtain. It is required by law.

Baby Spot: A spotlight which is smaller in size.

Backdrop: A curtain or canvas used to mask off the backstage area and usually painted to represent a scene or the sky.

Backing: A piece of scenery used for masking behind doors or windows of the stage set. They are used to finish the picture and to block the audience' view of backstage areas.

Backstage: The stage, or portion of the stage behind the curtain line which is not seen by the audience.

Balloon: An expression meaning to forget one's lines.

Batten: A long strip of wood, varying from 1"x 2" to 1" x 4" used for building scenery and also for hanging drapes, lights, or borders.

Batten: A long strip of wood, varying from 1" x 2" to 1" x 4" used for building scenery and also for hanging drapes, lights, or borders.

Blow up the Show: An expression used when an actor or crew member runs away from an egagement.

Board: A rack used in the box-office which is made in the shape of the seating arrangement and used to hold the tickets.

Book: The play manuscript.

Book: Two pieces of flat scenery of equal size hinged together.

Border: A short drop or drape hung across the upper portion of the stage to mask off the stage area high above the set.

Brace Cleat: A small piece of hardware placed on the back of a flat piece of scenery into which a stage brace is inserted for bracing or holding the flat in place.

Business: (See Stage Business)

Butt Joint: The joint made by placing two pieces of squared b nt angles to each other.

Call Board: A bulletin board on which important notices for actors and crew members are posted.

Call Boy: A crew member who notifies actors of their time for entrance.

Color: (See Frame, Color or Gelatine)

Cross: The movement of an actor on stage as he passes across stage from one position to another.

Cue: The words or action of one actor which indicate time for the next actor to speak or act. A signal for words or action.

Cyclorama (cyc): A large curtain or canvas hung from a batten at the rear of the stage and used to represent the sky. It may be painted with pigment or light. It is sometimes hung in a semicircular shape, thus, enclosing the acting area from both sides and back.

Dim Down: To lower or reduce the intensity of light. This many be done either slowly or quickly by use of the dimmers. To dim up means to increase the intensity of light.

Dimmer: A device used to regulate the intensity of lights on the stage by controlling the flow of current through an electrical circuit.

Down-stage: The acting area of the stage which is closest to the audience.

Elevation: The drawing of a stage setting showing the front view of scenery and properties as seen by the audience without perspective.

Flat: A frame covered with canvas or muslin forming a flat piece of scenery which may be used for side and back walls of settings.

Flies (fly loft): The space above the stage into which scenery and lighting equipment may be raised between acts or for storage.

Floor Plan: The diagram of a stage setting which shows the exact position of all scenery and set-props.

Fly: To raise the scenery into the area above the stage by lines suspended from the gridiron.

Footlights: The strip of lights which is sunk into the floor of the apron of the stage. They extend across the front of the stage before the act curtain and illuminate the actors from below and in front.

Foots: Footlights.

Frame, Color or Gelatine: A frame which is made especially for holding colored gelatine. Frames are made in various sizes to fit spotlight and floodlight apparatus.

Gelatin Color Medium: A thin sheet of colored gelatine which is placed before a floodlight, spotlight, or strip light to produce a particular color of light.

Grease Paint: A cosmetic made in various colors used as a base for the make-up of actors.

Green Room: A room located near the stage where actors wait for their cues. It is often used also as a general meeting place for director, crews, and actors.

Gridiron (Grid): A series of beams of wood or steel which are placed near the roof of the stage. These beams support the ropes and pulleys used in flying the scenery.

Ground row: A low piece of flat scenery cut in profile to represent shrubbery, rocks, fences, walls, hills, etc. It masks the bottom of the sky-drop and gives depth to the setting.

Grouping: A placing of the actors on stage to form a pleasing picture.

Ham: A poor actor who thinks he is good.

House: The auditorium - all that part in front of the stage is designated by the "house."

Inner Proscenium: A proscenium made by drapes or flats behind the stationary proscenium of the stage. The inner proscenium is used to vary the size of the proscenium opening.

Jack: A triangular shaped frame used to brace flat scenery from the back.

Keystone: A small piece of plywood cut in the shape of a keystone and used to strengthen the joints of scenery.

Lash Cleat: A small piece of metal hardware which is fastened to the back of a flat. The lash line is attached to it.

Lash Line: A sash cord used for lacing and holding two flats firmly together.

Levels: Acting areas formed by platforms or other stage properties which provide the actors varying heights above the level of the stage floor.

On-stage (On): The portion of the stage enclosed by the scenery and in sight of the audience.

Parallel: A collapsible or folding framework which, when set up holds a solid top, thus, forming a platform.

Places: A signal for all actors to take their places on stage, ready for the curtain to be raised.

Plot: Detailed notes and drawings which show the arrangement of scenery, properties, and lights.

Pointing (Point-up): Emphasizing a line, an idea, or a character.

Prompt Book: A marked copy of the play used by the director both as a guide for and a record of the production. It is also used by the prompter for assisting the actors with lines, cues, entrances, exits, etc.

Proscenium: The opening or arch in the wall which divides the stage from the auditorium.

Script: The entire copy of the play, including all lines and directions.

Shift: To move the properties and scenery of one setting off-stage and replace it with another setting.

Sides: The actors' lines and cues typed on half sheets of paper clipped together in the form of a pamphlet.

Sight Line: The view which any person, in any particular seat in the auditorium, has of any point on stage.

Soft-edged: Frosted gelatines used to subdue the light, especially where it overlaps from two spotlights.

Spot: A spotlight.

Stage Brace: A brace made to hold scenery in place. It is made of two lengths of wood which slide in order to adjust to the height desired.

Stage Business: Gestures, actions, or movements which accompany the lines of an actor.

Stage Directions: Written instructions in the script which give stage business, movements, groupings, etc.

Stile: The two upright, side pieces of lumber in the frame of a flat.

Strike: To remove the scenery and properties from the stage and store them in the proper places.

Strip: A strip-light.

Teaser: A short drape or border which is hung directly behind the act curtain to mask off the flies of the backstage area and to alter or vary the height of the proscenium opening. It also masks the border lights used in this position.

Tempo: The rate of speed with which the actors pick up their cues. Also the rate at which a scene or act moves.

Tie Off: To fasten the lash lines securely by means of tie-off cleats on flats, or to fasten lines to the pin rail.

Tie-off Cleat: A metal piece of hardware fastened to the back of a flat for the purpose of fastening and tying off a lash line.

Toggle: A cross piece of lumber used to reinforce the middle sections of a flat.

Tormenter: Movable pieces of scenery, flat or drapes, which stand just behind the proscenium at right and left of stage. They are the side pieces of the inner proscenium.

Types of Plays: Comedy - A play which offers conflicts for the characters but always presents a successful outcome. The interest is centered more in the unraveling of a situation than in human problems.

Farce - The lightest type of play. It is humorous and exaggerated, - presented only for the purpose of entertainment.

Melodrama - A sensational comedy which has an exaggerated appeal to the emotions. It may present problems, but always has a happy ending.

Tragedy - A play which deals with the deepest experiences of life, presenting a problem which involves love, jealousy or ambition. It usually ends in death, catastrophe, or frustration.

Up-stage: The playing area toward the back of the stage, - farthest from the audience.

Wing Pieces: Upright pieces of flat scenery used to mask the sides of the playing area.

Wings: The space at the right and the left of the stage which is behind the scenes, i.e. offstage.

Wood-wings: Wing pieces painted to represent forests, trees, bushes, etc.

Working Drawing: A scaled drawing from which the stage crew makes a piece of scenery. It is drawn in detail and gives specific information as to measurement, material, etc.

QUESTIONS ON ROYALTIES

In order that a better understanding of royalties may be given, the following selection from Eugene C. Davis's book[1], Amateur Theater Handbook, has been quoted in its entirety:

> Many good plays require the payment of royalties. This is as it should be. The teacher, the preacher, the attorney, and the mechanic get paid for their services. Why shouldn't the playwright? The play is the product of his labor. It is his property. The royalty or production fee is the remuneration he is entitled to for doing what he considers an important piece of work. It is only natural, therefore, for him to place the acting rights in the hands of some reputable play agency, without whose written permission no performance may be given. The law on this question is specific. It should be followed scrupulously by every amateur group.
>
> Do not take this admonition to mean that as the director of an amateur organization you should shun royalty plays. The financial problem, even in the smaller communities, is not insurmountable. Most play agencies are anxious to cooperate by making reasonable concessions to those groups which are actually unable to pay the maximum fee. All they ask is that, if you desire such concessions, you should write to them well in advance of the proposed opening date, outlining the specific circumstances under which the play is to be given. Points to be considered include the seating capacity of the auditorium, the prospective number of performances, the admission prices, the estimated box office receipts, the probable production expenses, and the disposition of the profits. Every request is judged on its merits in order that the play agencies may be fair to all parties concerned.
>
> More and more directors are following this procedure. They are anxious to find out the conditions under which royalty plays may be produced. Recently the author was afforded the unusual opportunity of reading many

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1. Davis, op. cit., pp. 46-49.

letters taken from the files of one of the leading play agencies. The letters represented a countrywide cross section of the problems arising from this question. Here are some of the queries most frequently asked. The reply in each case is given through the courtesy of a recognized authority, Barrett H. Clark, Executive Director of the Dramatists Play Service, New York City.

1. Must a royalty be paid when no admission is charged?
   Yes. The copyright law recognizes no distinction between paying and non-paying audiences. However, play agents want to know whether or not admission is to be paid, and often give special consideration to groups that intend to give performances free of charge.

2. Why is a royalty charged when the profits are devoted to charity?
   Chiefly because the owner should not be asked to donate to charities he knows nothing about. Also, the owners usually donate to their own favorite charities, and to be asked to make further donations is not quite fair. Finally, the agent is making a donation when a fee is waived — he is donating his commission, which is his chief means of existence.

3. Are play agencies willing to make concessions to groups located in small rural communities far removed from any large city or town?
   Yes, provided that other conditions, such as income, cost, and so forth, also warrant a concession.

4. Why is a royalty demanded on a religious play given in a church?
   Why is a clergyman paid for the job he does?

5. Is a royalty charged for a play given informally for the membership of an amateur dramatic organization?
   Yes. The presence of an audience, that is, of anyone outside the cast and the actual producing staff at any performance, makes it a public performance and, therefore, subject to payment.

6. Under what conditions may a play be produced at a school assembly without the payment of royalty?

This is a matter that is decided by each agency. For instance, the Dramatists Play Service permits one-act plays to be so used when no admission is charged and no audience is present except the school body and the faculty, and when the performance is given during the school day and there is no publicity in the public press. Permission must be requested in advance.

7. When a matinee is given for students and an evening performance for adults, is there a reduction in the royalty fee?

Often, though again each agent has his own policy. It all depends on the probable size of the audience, the admission charge, and the expenses. Again, the only safe rule is to tell the agent frankly what is desired, giving all pertinent facts.

8. Does the classroom production of a play entail the payment of royalty?

A real classroom production —with only the class and the instructor present—is not a public performance, but a rehearsal. Provided no outsiders are present, a school can give such performances, without payment, every day in the year.

9. Are any concessions made by the owners of plays when the profits are devoted exclusively to dramatic purposes?

Everything else being equal, most agents are probably inclined to strain a point in making reductions if profits go back into dramatic work. They see no special reason for encouraging schools to use drama in order to raise money for football gear, band instruments, or senior banquets.

10. On what basis is one particular group charged the maximum royalty and another group the minimum fee for the same play?

Largely on ability to pay—provided both groups produce it during the same year. A play ten years old is usually obtainable at a lower price than a new one. Agents are anxious to help the

group that just cannot afford a maximum fee.

11. Are special terms available for the production of plays in summer camps?

Again, it depends on the agent. One agent is in the habit of allowing short plays to be used free of royalty if several copies of the play are purchased. All summer camp directors are urged to write to agents explaining their particular problems.

12. Does the enrollment of a school have anything to do with the amount of the royalty?

Not necessarily, though it is usually true that a small school has financial problems not faced by a large one. The essence of the question is: "How badly does a school really want a particular play? How much money does it take from the audience? How much does it pay in expenses?"

AN INTRODUCTORY UNIT
for
THE TEACHING OF DRAMATICS

An example of a day by day plan for one week

I. First Day:

A. Subject and Material Content

1. Mimeograph forms to be filled out by the pupils
2. Introduction of the teacher
3. Interviews: class divided into groups
4. Assignments: Mimeographed sheet of suitable material for voice recording.

B. Activities

1. Students fill in mimeographed forms and write a frank discussion on "Why I am Taking the Course."
2. The teacher introduces, or "sells himself as a person worth knowing," to the class
3. Each student talks with another student for ten minutes, finding out all he can about him, especially:
   a. Work previously done in dramatics; where studied, parts played, etc.
   b. Plays read
   c. Movies seen
   d. Knowledge of stagecraft
   e. Knowledge of costuming
   f. Some peculiarity

   When the ten minutes has elapsed, each student introduces the one with whom he has held the conversation, trying to make the introduction as interesting as possible in order that the class may "know" each person.
4. Required assignments:
   a. Become familiar with the content of this mimeographed sheet. (See 4. above) Be ready to read it smoothly or memorize it before you make your voice recording.
   b. Sometime to-day or tomorrow sign your name on the "Sign Up Chart" indicating the time you would like to have your voice recording made.
   c. Obtain a large, loose leaf notebook. Start your notebook, which you will keep throughout this course, with a journal. In this journal you will record certain observations each day. Keep your eyes and ears open to-day and before coming to class tomorrow write your observations on "The Most Interesting Person I Saw To-day."

5. Optional Assignment. Bring in any pictures that you think might be interesting to us. (These pictures will be placed on the bulletin board sometime during the week.)

II. Second Day:

A. Subject and Material Content

1. Introduction to stage environment
   a. Physical content of stage
   b. Discussion
   c. Materials used in constructing, lighting, costuming, and other phases of production

2. Moving picture camera

3. Candid camera

B. Activities

1. The teacher takesthe group onto the stage showing them the various stage equipment, giving them the stage terms for such equipment, and explaining the use of the various equipment. The students are encouraged to ask questions while making this tour of the stage. A discussion period follows the tour.

2. The teacher places various small equipment such as: tools used in scene construction, properties which have been used in various productions, lighting equipment, and make-up on several small tables. A rack of costumes may also be exhibited. The students are told to walk around, look at the various articles, and discuss them with each other. A time allotment is made for this so that a general discussion may take place after they have returned to their seats.

3. During the stage tour, the observation of small equipment, or the discussion which follows, moving pictures or candid camera shots may be made of the students. Such pictures, taken when the students have not been warned or prepared will show habits of posture and bodily and facial expressions. If possible it is best to have a former student of the course come in to make these pictures so that the teacher may be free to direct the attention and interest of the class.

4. Required Assignment:
   a. For tomorrow write in your journal your reaction to the stage tour that we made to-day. Tell whether it was valuable, and if so, why? Also tell what most interested you during this tour of observation.
   b. Be prepared to give a short pantomime (one minute) tomorrow. You may choose one listed on the mimeographed sheet or one of your own. You may work alone or in groups of two or more.

III. Third Day:

A. Subject and Material Content

1. Pantomimes: During this introductory unit, the pantomimes will be given without much discussion. The primary purpose is to orientate the group, and to take pictures of the students before they have had any discussion which will lead them to improve their posture and bodily action.

2. Moving Picture Camera

3. Candid Camera

4. Bulletin Board
   a. Candid camera pictures of people who have previously taken the course.
   b. Pictures from magazines
   c. Pictures obtained from Motion Picture Houses
   Note: The collection of pictures on the bulletin board for the third and fourth days of this unit should show especially that bodily movement, gesture, and facial expression are an important part of speech.
5. Assignment: A mimeographed sheet of suggested books of fairy tales

B. Activities

1. Each student will give a pantomime by himself or in a group.

2. After each pantomime, the group will conjecture as to the meaning of the pantomime. They may give suggestions or re-do a pantomime according to their own interpretation of it.
   Note: This is a good place for the teacher to guide the students into having something "good" to say before giving a criticism.

3. During these pantomimes, moving pictures or candid camera shots may be taken of the students. Pictures may be taken on both the second and third day or on one day only. The essential thing is to see that each student has his picture taken. It is well to remember in taking moving pictures that the shot of each student or group of students should be long enough to be beneficial.

4. Required assignments
   a. Read a fairy tale and be prepared to tell it to the class. We will all pretend that we are little children when these fairy tales are told, so be prepared to tell the story to "little children." You may choose a story from the books suggested on the mimeographed sheet or one of your own.
   b. For tomorrow write, in your journal, your reaction to the most dramatic thing that you saw to-day; this may be something which happened in school, on the street, or at home.

IV. Fourth Day:

A. Subject and Material Content

1. Visual Aids:
   a. Moving Picture Projector
   b. Films of former students
   c. Stereopticon or projector for kodak prints
   d. Still pictures of former students or magazine pictures, etc.

   Note: It is well to build up a catalogue of movie films and organize them into a definite sequence showing the various activities in which students are engaged throughout the course such as pantomimes, breathing and voice exercises, stagecraft, scenes from plays, etc. Thus, the students have a preview of the course which arouses interest in the activities which are to follow and makes them anxious to "get to work."

2. A One Act Play presented by former students of the class.

3. Discussion

4. Assignment:
   a. A reserved shelf or section of shelves in the library. (If this is not possible the teacher may provide such a shelf in the classroom)
   b. Books on dramatics
   c. Scrap books illustrating different types of scrap books which may be kept for the course.
   d. Pictures. These may be kept in large envelopes and labeled for the specific thing they illustrate, as: "Posture," "Scenes from Dramatic Situations," "Facial Expressions," "Hands," etc.

B. Activities

1. The students become an audience.
   a. The teacher shows moving pictures of former students of the Dramatics Class. He directs the attention of the students to important points in posture, bodily action, acting, etc.
   b. The teacher shows enlarged "still" pictures on a screen, directing attention to posture, bodily expression, facial expression.
   c. Former students of the class present a one act play.

2. Questions and discussion period. The students ask questions or discuss the pictures or the play they have just seen.

3. Assignment: Write in your journal your reaction to something you saw or heard to-day. What did it <u>do</u> to you? How did it make you feel, etc.?

4. Optional Assignment: Browse through the books, scrap books, and pictures you will find on the "reserve shelf for Dramatics" in the library.

V. Fifth Day:

A. Subject and Material Content

1. Bulletin Board: Pictures which have been brought in by the students during the first three days should now be placed on the bulletin board.

2. Fairy Stories

3. Movies and Plays

4. Assignments;
   a. Autobiography
   b. Scrapbooks
   c. Notebooks
   d. Reading
   e. Projects

B. Activities

1. Attention called to the bulletin board and credit given to students who have contributed pictures.

2. A five or ten minute period in which students are allowed to look at the pictures and discuss them.

3. Each student tells a fairy story while the rest of the class listens. They are asked to listen from the viewpoint of a little child and be ready to choose about three or four students who will be able to hold the attention of the elementary grades. (The ones selected may actually be sent to the lower grades to tell these stories if the school set-up makes it possible.)

4. Discussion of movies and plays which the students have seen. This will be a conversation period led by the teacher, who will guide the thinking into those channels which are particularly related to the course in dramatics.

5. Assignments for the course:
   a. Write an autobiography. Call it "Me" or any other name that you think is suitable. Make this paper really <u>you</u>, not a mere sketch of your life. Tell what goes on "inside" of you, - how you react to various things, the things you like and the things you detest, etc. Tell about things that have happened to you. Have this assignment ready two weeks from today.
   b. Throughout the term you are to keep a scrap book. This should be a loose-leaf scrap book so that you can add as many pages as you like. Divide your scrap book into the following sections:
      1). Acting:
         a). Bodily Expression
         b). Facial Expression
         c). Gestures
         d). Posture

2). Pictures of groupings:
   a). People
   b). Furniture
   c). Levels, etc.
3). Make-up
4). Costuming
5). Stage Settings
6). Stage Personalities
   a). Actors
   b). Actresses
   c). Musical Comedy Stars
   d). Directors
   e). Playwrights
   f). Scene Designers

You may make a nameplate for each of these sections in your scrap book. Think up your own name for each section, for example, instead of putting "Make-up" on your name plate, you might put "Paint and Patches."

c. You have already started your notebooks with a journal. Other things you will include in it are:
1). Reviews of plays you have seen or heard on stage or radio
2). Cuttings of plays
3). Outlines of plays you read
4). Class notes
5). Exercise material: mimeographed, dictated, or copied from books
6). Vocabulary drills: mimeographed, copied
7). Comments on articles read
8). Dictionary of dramatic terms
9). Sketches (optional)

d. Read any six plays from the books on the reserve shelf in the library

TRAINING IN THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF BODILY ACTION

Key: "Actions speak louder than words." - a Proverb

Objective: To provide training which will develop integration and co-ordination of the body organism.

Part I. Giving the Challenge

If photographs or moving pictures were made of the students during the first week of the course, it should be possible to show these pictures before training in bodily action begins. The pictures alone should be challenge enough for each individual to want to improve.

A verbal challenge might be such as this:

> Have you ever wished that you might see yourself as others see you? How many times have you been disappointed in candid camera shots that have been made of you? Were you ever embarrassed because "certain people" saw those pictures? What did you do, blame it on the camera? - or did you think to yourself, "Why did I stand like that, or look that way? I know I <u>can</u> look better than that."
>
> Remember, that when you are caught off guard and are not posing you are probably using your habitual posture and gestures. Of course you <u>can</u> look better you tell yourself. Certainly you can. When you "pose" for a picture, you put on your "company manners" and "look pretty." But the majority of people see you when you are off guard, so if you are wise, your common sense tells you that your company manners should become your every-day manners.
>
> Whether you know it or not your body "talks." Your feelings are expressed by the way you walk, stand, or sit. Your teachers can usually tell how you feel when you enter the classroom. For example, suppose at the end of a class period a boy receives an examination paper on which he has made a very low grade. He won't walk into the next classroom with vigor and have a big smile on his face. In all probability, he will walk slowly and look very dejected.

Since your body "talks," you want it to tell a good story don't you? The sad part is that many fine people go through their entire lives with some careless or nervous habits that they don't even realize they have. It may be in the way they walk, slouching or shuffling along with head bent down giving the impression that they are afraid to look the world in the face. It may be the simple habit of holding the head too high and thus appearing "stuck up." It may be a nervous gesture or a facial expression.

We call all of these things bodily movements, and it is one of the purposes of this course to train young people to have bodily movements which express the <u>best</u> that is in them <u>all</u> of the time.

Part II. Training for Good Posture

A. Showing an educational movie of correct posture.

Excellent films on correct posture are available, and no speech teacher should ignore the advantage of this visual aid if the school provides the equipment whereby it may be shown.

These films may be rented, but the purchase of such a film would be a wise investment.

B. Checking individual postures.

1. Have each pupil assume his natural standing position. Discuss his defects or faults with him and give instructions for attaining an unconstrained posture.

2. Encourage the students to check their own postures before a large mirror. Suggest the following:

   a. Pretend there is no mirror in front of you, and move about before it; suddenly look up and find yourself in a characteristic pose or action.

   b. Try many positions both standing and sitting to see "how you look to other people."

c. Stand sideways and look in the mirror. Check your bad points of posture and apply the instructions given when the teacher made an individual check-up on posture.

d. Place a chair before a mirror and watch yourself sit down. Make this test both from the front and side views. Check on the sitting posture.

C. Giving class exercises for developing good postures:

1. Stand against a wall, and flatten the back against it as much as possible.

2. Stand tall with feet together and arms hanging freely at the sides. Pull in on the abdominal muscles. Raise the chin so that it is at right angles to the floor, and throw the weight of the body so that it is directly over the instep.

   Slouch and then resume the correct posture again by following the above directions.

3. Stand with the feet slightly apart. Shift the weight of the body from one leg to another moving from right to left.

4. Take a correct standing position with one foot forward. Shift the weight of the body back and forth.

5. Sit down by following these directions. Find the chair with the back of the leg; lower yourself into the chair keeping the back straight, the abdominal muscles pulled in and the chest high.

   Check your sitting position: The base of the spine should be against the bend of the chair; the back, from the waist up, should be straight; the whole thigh should rest on the seat of the chair; the knees and feet should be about two inches apart; the feet should be flat on the floor with one slightly in front of the other; the head should be poised with the chin at right angles to the neck.

Stand with the least effort possible by pushing yourself up with the foot which is back. Do not use the hands to push up. Keep the back straight, the abdominal muscles in and the chest high. Walk away from the chair, keeping correct posture.

6. Place a book, which is not too heavy on the head, and walk about the room.

   When sufficient practice has been given to walking on a straight level, use a set of "scenery steps" from the stage and practice walking up and down with a book on the head.

7. Place a chair on the platform (or in front of the class) and have students walk to the chair, rise, come forward, say a sentence or two, and return to the chair and sit down.

Part III. Motivating Bodily Expression through Activities

A. Training for co-ordination through pantomimes:

1. Showing moving pictures of former students doing "pantomimes."

   The teacher who uses this device should keep one or more films on pantomimes separated from the films showing a sequence of speech activities.

   Allow the students to talk quietly as the film is shown and guess what the pantomimes portray.

2. Guiding the students' preparation for pantomimes:

   Call to the students' minds the old saying "actions speak louder than words." Develop this thought by describing a pantomime between two or three children in a class who think the teacher is not watching them. Stress the fact that such a pantomime is natural and sincere. Encourage the students to show naturalness and sincerity in their pantomimes.

A mimeographed list of suggestions for pantomimes may be given to the students, but it should only be suggestive and they should not be confined to it.

3. Suggested Pantomimes for one person:

   a. A cheer leader working his hardest.
   b. A traffic officer at a busy street.
   c. A speaker who is "overcome" by stage fright.
   d. A preacher who orates.
   e. A baseball player hitting a home run.
   f. A driver starting a Model T Ford.
   g. A photographer taking a picture of a baby.
   h. An elderly person who has lost his glasses.
   i. A girl in her best dress trying to cross a stream on slippery rocks.
   j. A man washing a mischievous dog.

4. Suggested pantomimes for more than one person:

   a. Women playing bridge.
   b. A salesman and an uninterested customer who has an interested wife.
   c. A dentist, his assistant, and a nervous patient.
   d. A burglar and the lady of the house.
   e. A boy attending a football game with a girl who "asks questions."
   f. A patient young girl teaching an awkward boy to dance.
   g. Several young people trying to spend the night in a haunted house.
   h. A director and a dumb actor.
   i. A waitress and a man who is on a diet.
   j. A mother giving castor-oil to a spoiled child.

5. Good lists of suggested pantomimes are given in the following books:

   Speech Education, Sara M. Barber
   The Speech Arts, Alice Evelyn Craig
   American Speech, Hedde and Brigance
   The Stage and The School, Katharine Ommanney
   The New Better Speech, Weaver, Borchers, and Woolbert

   (These books are listed in the bibliography of this thesis.)

B. Calling attention to bodily action through the use of pictures.

Arrange for an effective way of showing the students as many pictures portraying bodily action as possible.

Suggested activities:

1. Display many pictures in the class room. Have the students walk about discussing them leisurely, then write their reaction to a picture that impressed them.

2. Arrange a theatre party. Watch the movie or play giving special attention to the bodily expression of the players. Discuss the bodily action in a later class meeting.

3. Have students bring in pictures which they have collected for their note books or scrapbooks. Put each student's pictures in a large envelope and pass them among the group. Discuss some of the pictures.

C. Co-ordinating the parts of the body through rhythm.

Using a victrola or a piano, direct the students in rhythmical exercises. If the teacher feels inadequate in choosing these exercises, he should consult the physical education teacher.

D. Co-operating with the Glee Club

Select a number of songs which lend themselves to illustration. Have the Glee Club sing while the speech students illustrate the songs by forming tableaux.

Present a program of illustrated songs for an assembly program.

E. Form tableaux to illustrate famous paintings.

F. "Trying-on" facial expressions before a mirror.

Suggest that the students practice in the privacy of their own rooms, expressing:

1. joy
2. anger
3. fear
4. hate
5. determination
6. pain
7. surprise
8. thought
9. horror
10. scorn
11. worry
12. discouragement

G. Experimenting with gestures before a mirror.

Suggest that the students experiment with gestures before a mirror, trying:

1. raising the eyebrows
2. raising the eyebrows and opening the mouth
3. shrugging the shoulders
4. frowning and pointing with arm raised
5. shaking the finger, then the fist
6. opening the eyes wide, and holding the hands up in front with palms turned out.
7. shaking the head up and down and smiling
8. folding the arms and patting the foot
9. bringing the fist down heavily upon a desk or table
10. smiling and holding the hands forward with palms up

H. Suiting action to words.

Have the students say the following words, suiting the action to them:

1. "I said, No!"
2. "Hurrah! Hurrah! we won!"
3. "It's so cold!"
4. "Ouch, that hurts!"
5. "I hate you!"
6. "Come on, we're late."
7. "What a lovely room!"
8. "Hey, you, up there!"
9. "Do you want this?"
10. "Hush, the baby is sleeping."

I. Applying gestures to a speaking situation.

Have the students prepare a short speech or

story which requires numerous gestures and give it before the class. The expository speech lends itself very well to this activity. Discuss the gestures of each speaker, stressing the <u>good</u> points.

ENCOURAGING GOOD VOCAL PRODUCTION IN TONE AND WORD

Key: "A good voice is a voice well used."

Objective: To develop skill in the proper use of the speech organs.

Part I. Giving the Challenge:

A. "Hearing yourself as others hear you" by means of a voice recording is usually challenge enough for the student to work for improvement. Speech teachers who do not already have the equipment for recording voices should use every effort to obtain a reliable instrument.

B. A few suggestions for "talking it over" with the students:

"Did you ever feel hurt because people seemed to disregard what you were saying and interrupted you? Did you ever see a far-away look in the eyes of a person to whom you were speaking and suddenly have that person say, " - er - - huh?" Did you ever have the feeling that others were bored when you were speaking?

In all these instances, you probably thought the "other person" was very impolite, didn't you? Perhaps he was, but did you ever stop to think that <u>you</u> might be at fault?

(Note: It is more effective if the teacher demonstrates the following faults as he speaks to the class.)

Suppose, for example, a person speaks in a monotone never raising or lowering his voice. He would soon put his listeners to day-dreaming wouldn't he, - or else they would interrupt him. Suppose a person speaks so softly that he can hardly be heard? His listeners will have to strain their ears and very often ask him to repeat. Suppose a person spoke very loudly, causing an unpleasant feeling in his listeners ears? People would want to get away from him wouldn't they? Suppose a person spoke in a high pitched nasal voice? He wouldn't encourage people to listen to him, would he? Suppose a person whines when he talks? His listeners either think he is sick or that he has been spoiled all his life.

Are you saying to yourself, "I don't do any of those things"? How do you know you don't? A person cannot hear himself as others hear him. Only by hearing his voice on a record which has been made on a reliable machine can a person really tell how he sounds to other people.

Most people have vocal organisms which are capable of making beautiful sounds, but they do not know how to use them. Is there any difference in the sound produced by a child practicing on a violin and a skilled violinist giving a concert? There is exactly that much difference in human voices. If you want people to listen to you, and be interested in you, you must train your voice to be effective.

Part II. Training for Correct Breathing

A. At this time, show the students the necessity of good posture habits for developing correct breathing. Discuss the effect that both posture and breathing have upon the voice. Review and continue work on posture.

B. Explain that the breath is the source of energy used in speaking and that the voice will not be effective if the source of power is poor. Term the diaphragm the "floating power" of the voice.

Using drawings of the human figure, trace the process of breathing showing the relation of the breathing process to the vocal process.

C. Arrange for the science teacher to give an expository talk on the process of breathing.

D. Show a sound-movie which explains the process of breathing.

E. Exercises in breathing which will help develop tone quality.

1. Using small hand mirrors, speak with the mirror held close to the mouth. Discuss the relations of breathing and vocal production.

2. Breathe deeply, exhale as slowly as possible humming, - "m - m - m - m - m." Time yourself. Determine the number of seconds you are able to hum on <u>one</u> breath.

3. Yawn repeatedly.

4. Breathe deeply and in turn use each of the vowel sounds while exhaling. Use the breath to support the sound.

5. Take a deep breath, say "me-me-me-, etc." as long as possible on one breath.

6. Close the eyes, take a deep breath and start to yawn. At the instant the yawn is ready to break, speak - using a vowel sound, as: "ah" or "no". Then use "la, le, li, lo" all on one breath. Repeat the process using a phrase, as: "Roll on thou deep and dark blue ocean," or "Lovely Lolita drifting along."

7. Take a deep breath and exhale slowly, saying "oo, oh, ah, ay, ee."

8. Inhale and exhale slowly, holding nasal sounds as long as possible: Use "ring," "hum," "moon," "sing," "wing," "cling," "wringing," "flinging," "bringing," etc.

9. Inhale with a deep breath. Exhale using the "m" sound and humming. Open the lips and change the "m" sound to the "n" sound. Repeat until the breath is used.

   Repeat, using the "e" sound between the "m" and "n", thus: "m-e-n-e-m-e-n-e-m-e-n-e-m-e."

10. Hold the flame of a candle close to the mouth. Get a good standing position, inhale correctly and release the breath very slowly using a vowel sound. Try not to make the flame flicker.

    Use the same exercise with a phrase or a sentence.

11. Use "pinwheels" or "Jumping Jimmies" to strengthen the abdominal walls.

Part III. Determining the voice faults of individuals.

A. This may be done during the first student-teacher conference. However, if the teacher deems it wise not to do so at that time, a second conference with each student should now be called.

B. Discuss the student's speech fault with him, telling him whether he has a harsh, breathy, squeaky, rasping, muffled, or weak voice.

Be sure to explain what the adjective means when describing his voice fault. Give plenty of time for explanation and show him what effect his particular fault has on his listeners.

C. If it is possible, play records of previous students who have had the same fault and show by contrasting records how they improved.

D. Give each individual definite steps to follow in practicing for improvement.

E. Take the student to the piano, have him read or speak a familiar selection while the notes on the piano are struck. Begin with middle C and go up or down until the dominant tone of the student's voice is discovered.

By the same method, discover the student's voice range.

F. Give each individual exercises for raising or lowering his dominant tone according to his need.

G. Give all students exercises for widening their range.

Part IV. Using activities which will make the student voice conscious.

A. Listening to radio speakers

Make this assignment at least one week in advance. Have the students listen to various programs and note voice qualities. On a day which has been previously decided upon discuss reactions of the members of the class.

B. Using a tuning fork and resonator

Borrow a tuning fork and resonator from the science department. Demonstrate, as the resonance of voice is explained and discussed.

C. Using rubber bands to demonstrate resonance

Stretch a rubber band tightly and snap it with the finger. Do this at various degrees of tightness. Then stretch a number of rubbers over an open box. Use various degrees of

tightness and snap them to demonstrate resonance.

D. Giving Speeches to demonstrate vocal quality

Have the students prepare and give informal speeches on some of the following subjects:

1. Tell about an experience in which you were bored, annoyed, or embarrassed by one of the following:
   a. a monotonous voice
   b. a weak voice
   c. a loud voice
   d. a high-pitched voice
   e. a nasal voice
   f. a husky voice
   g. a harsh voice
   h. a hoarse voice
   i. a whining voice

2. Give a speech in which you illustrate the interviews of an employer and several people who have different types of voice faults.

E. Listening to recordings of speeches and speech sound.

Every speech teacher should keep a catalogue of good records made by experts. A few suggestions are given below:

Linguaphone Institute records:
The sounds of English, - The vowels, diphthongs and consonants of the English language enunciated by competent teachers.

Victor records:
Shakespeare "Address to the Players" (Sothern) 74703 and 6494
Shakespeare "Mercy Speech" (Marlowe) 74673
Longfellow, H.W. "Paul Revere's Ride" 355555

F. Forming the habit of reading aloud often, in privacy.

Encourage the students to read aloud for at least one hour each week.

G. Keeping a section in the notebook for a personal dictionary of new words.

Record the new words which are met in reading or conversing day by day. Use the dictionary. Copy not only the definition of the words but the diacritical markings. Learn to pronounce the word correctly and use it in the speaking vocabulary.

H. Preparing oral readings.

Keeping the author's theme, purpose, and mood in mind, prepare oral readings. Try to show by the voice the character of the person who is speaking. Decide what quality, volume and pitch will best suggest the interpretation.

I. Making a collection of Tongue Twisters for use in and out of class.

Start the students off with a few tongue twisters. Teach them the best method of saying them, and then encourage them to bring new ones to class as often as possible.

Have a section of the notebooks devoted to tongue twisters.

J. Recognizing classmates by their voices.

Blindfold a member of the class. Have another class member speak. See whether the blindfolded student can recognize the voice of the person speaking. Continue until each member of the class has spoken, then blindfold another student.

K. Using a metronome to set the tempo of speaking.

Set the metronome at varying rates of tempo. Speak at the rate set by the metronome to test the effect of tempo on emotional effect and meaning. Note that seriousness, dignity, and solemnity are denoted by slow tempo in speaking, and that gayety and excitement are expressed by rapid tempo.

L. Learning to pause at the right places.

Give the students a mimeographed list of sayings which may have more than one meaning, - according to the phrasing used.

Example: The mother said the boy was ill.

The mother/ said the boy/ was ill.
or
The mother said/ the boy was ill.

Have the students read the sentences, grouping the words as many ways as possible.

Suggest that the students find other sentences in which the meaning may be changed by the grouping of words and pausing.

Part V. Using class exercises in which all may participate.

A. Drills for spontaneity and ease of production:

1. Merry, rollicking, frolicking May
Into the woods came skipping one day;
She teased the brook till he laughed outright;
And gurgled and scolded with all his might;
She chirped to the birds and bade them sing
A chorus of welcome to Lady Spring.
George Macdonald

2. "It isn't raining rain to me,
It's raining daffodils;
In every dimpled drop I see
Wild flowers on distant hills."
Robert Lovemen

3. Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!
Rescue my castle before the hot day
Brightens to blue from its silvery gray.
Boot, saddle, to horse, and away.
Robert Browning

4. It's ho! for a song as wild and free
As the swash of the waves in the open sea.
John N. Hilliard

5. Roll on, thou deep and dark blue ocean, roll!
Byron

B. Drills for pure tones

1. Vocalize "a,e,i,o,u."
2. Vocalize "ee, ay, ah, oh, u."
3. "Sweet and low, sweet and low,
Wind of the western sea.
Low, low, breathe and blow,
Wind of the western sea!
Tennyson
4. Repeat "ha-ha" on short breaths.
Use "ho-ho" the same way.

Drills for resonance

1. Hum using "m" and then "n" alternating.

   a. First, use one pitch
   b. Second, vary the pitch

2. Hum the "m" sound in arpeggio

3. Hum "m" changing to each vowel, as:
   "m-mah"
   "m-m-ay"
   "m-m-ee"
   "m-m-oh"
   "m-m-i"
   "m-m-ooh"
   "m-m-aw"

4. Repeat "ding-dong" holding the "ng" sound.

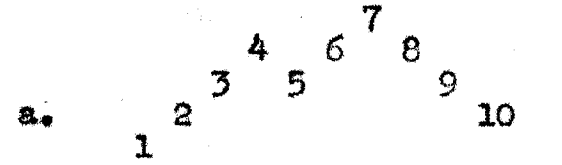
5. Practice: Retreating and beating and meeting and sheeting,
   Delaying and straying and playing and spraying,
   Advancing and prancing and glancing and dancing,
   Recoiling, turmoiling and toiling and boiling, . . .
   Robert Southey

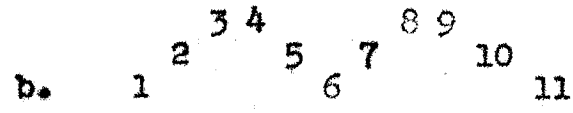
   "m - oo" - Moon of my delight, O mellow moon.

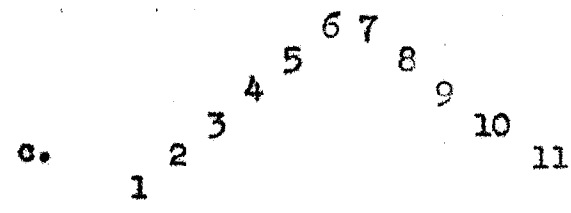
   "m - oh" - Molten, golden ocean moaning neath the sun.

D. Drills for flexibility and variety of pitch

1. Count using various varieties of pitch, as:







2. Speak the following sentences using the variety of pitch indicated:

a.
think to
I ing that
was of day.

b.
something?
say thought
you I you
Did did.

c.
I know
didn't
that!
Oh,

d.
you
go?
Will

3. Say the following words using the inflections indicated:

a. oh oh oh oh

b. yes yes yes yes

c. I did not. Yes you did.

d. Oh no! Very well.

4. Say the following words or sentences expressing as many meanings as possible by using variety of pitch and inflection.

a. "Oh"
b. "Well"
c. "Yes"
d. "Hello"
e. "We are not going."
f. "What do you want?"
g. "Where is my book?"
h. "Oh, dear me."
i. "I can't believe it."
j. "Did you see him?"

E. Drills for the lips:

1. Repeat: me-mo-me-mo-me-mo-me-mo-me-etc.

2. Repeat: explosively, pit-pat-pit-pat-etc.

3. Repeat: be-bo-be-bo-be-bo-be-bo-be-bo-etc.

F. Drills for the jaw:

1. Repeat the following sounds:
   da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da-etc.
   la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-etc.
   ah-wah-ah-wah-ah-wah-ah-wah-ah-wah-etc.

2. Repeat the following sounds, prolonging the vowel sound:
   Wee-ee-ee-ee-ee-ee-ee-!
   Wah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-!
   Bah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-!

3. Say these words making a long face as you say them:

s	crown	dye
	go	gather
	right	man

G. Dril[illegible] tongue:

1. Trill the "r" as long as possible. Take a deep breath, and say "B-rrrrrrrrrrrrr".

2. Say rapidly: fud-dud-dud-dud-dud- fud-dud-dud-dud- etc.

3. Say rapidly: Rat-tat-a-tat-tat, repeat.

4. Say: te-ta-te-ta-te-ta-etc.

5. Say: sa-se-si-so-su, repeat.

H. Drills for Volume:

1. Breathe deeply and say the following:

   a. "Ho-ho-ho-ho"
   b. "Ha-ha-ha-ha"
   c. "Sail ho! Sail ho!"
   d. "Ahoy! Ahoy!"
   e. "Yo ho, lads!"
   f. "Halt, who goes there?"
   g. "Fire! Fire!"
   h. "Boomlay, boomlay, boomlay, boom."
   i. "Glory, glory, hallelujah!"
   j. "Heave ho, heave ho!"

2. Stand before the class and say a given sentence with volume suitable for the following situations:

   a. the classroom
   b. a crowded street corner
   c. the library
   d. The dinner table
   e. the stage

Note: There is an abundance of good drill material given in many speech texts. If the students are not required to have text books, the teacher should request copies of a number of texts to be put on the library shelves. Even if this is impossible, the teacher will surely increase his personal library from time to time.

Because drill material is so abundant in the texts, only a very sketchy outline has been given in this unit..

LIST OF PUBLISHERS

Walter H. Baker Company, 178 Tremont Street, Boston, Mass.

Banner Play Bureau, Inc., 519 Main Street, Cincinnati, Ohio.

The Children's Theatre Press, South Hills, Charleston, W. Va.

Drama Book Shop, 48 West Fifty-second Street, New York, N.Y.

The Dramatic Publishing Company, 59 East Van Buren Street, Chicago, Ill.

Dramatists Play Service, 6 East Thirty-ninth Street, New York, N.Y.

Eldridge Entertainment House, Franklin, Ohio.

Samuel French, 25 West Forty-fifth Street, New York, N.Y.

Longmans, Green & Company, 55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y.

The Northwestern Press, 2200 Park Avenue, Minneapolis, Minn.

Row, Peterson and Company, 1911 Ridge Avenue, Evanston, Ill.

Wetmore Declamation Bureau, 1631 South Paxton Street, Sioux City, Iowa.